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ArchitectureBoston
Spring 2000

Time

Even the most jaded of us must admit that the recent turning of our calendars is an extraordinary event. It's an appropriate moment to reconsider the influence of the fourth dimension on a profession that prides itself on its skill in manipulating three dimensions.

Time, as many of us were taught, is what distinguishes architecture from "mere" sculpture. Like music, architecture is sequential, a series of episodes that together create a coherent experience. Time is the difference between a chord and a symphony, a word and a novel, a *plié* and a ballet, a morsel and a meal.

But the structures we erect are themselves part of an even larger sequence. They inevitably reflect the passage of historical time. Past cultures live on in the buildings that remain, in structures that continue to teach us about the social hierarchy, politics, religion, and economy of their eras. The buildings of the past serve as a useful reminder to today's architects, who — as they fret about controlling every last detail — should remember that memory and history will always affect what we build in ways we often cannot predict.

Time, of course, is synonymous with change. In this issue, we explore changes in our city, changes in our profession, changes in the meaning of "beauty," even changes in the ways we choose to remember the past.

■ ■ ■

Change comes to publications, too, and our masthead reflects some recent changes at *ArchitectureBoston*. I welcome the new members of our editorial board: Fred Koetter FAIA; Ted Landsmark, Assoc. AIA; Otile McManus; Carla Munsat; Wellington Reiter AIA; Mary Silveria AIA; Missy Sittler AIA; and Jane Weinzapfel FAIA. I would especially like to thank our departing editorial board members — Arthur Cohen AIA, Ed Frenette AIA, Duncan Pendlebury AIA, John Rossi, Assoc. AIA, and Rick Rundell AIA — for their dedication and wise counsel; we are pleased that they have agreed to continue their association with *ArchitectureBoston* as members of our new advisory council, which will help us plan the direction of the magazine. The BSA's new director of communications, Stephen Sattler, joins our staff as circulation and marketing director. And many readers will recognize the names of Steve Rosenthal and Peter Vanderwarker, who join our masthead as contributing photographers. Their unwavering support and cheerful readiness to respond to all requests for help have been invaluable and much appreciated…some things never change.

I am also delighted to announce that the collective efforts of all our supporters, advertisers, contributors, and staff have been recognized by the American Institute of Architects with a national award for excellence in public affairs. In honoring *ArchitectureBoston*, the awards jurors said: "This is as good as it gets!" Although we are deeply appreciative, I respectfully disagree with their assessment. With your continuing support, *ArchitectureBoston* is going to get even better.

Elizabeth S. Padjen FAIA
Editor

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OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Code Change to Affect All Commercial Construction in Massachusetts

The Massachusetts Board of Building Regulations and Standards (BBRS) has adopted **NEW ENERGY CONSERVATION REQUIREMENTS** into the State Building Code (780 CMR). The new provisions will take effect on **JANUARY 1, 2001**, and will cover all new commercial and high-rise residential construction in the state.

BBRS will be offering **FREE SEMINARS** on the new Energy Code. The following schedule is for ENVELOPE seminars. (Sessions on Lighting and on HVAC requirements will also be offered.) Registration is required at least one week in advance. AIA members will receive CES Learning Units through the Boston Society of Architects. Please register by e-mail at www.state.ma.us/bbrs/register.htm or call 617-951-1433 x323. AM sessions run from 8:30 to 12:00, PM sessions from 1:00 to 4:30. Directions will be sent with confirmation.

FREE ENVELOPE SEMINARS

CITY	DATE	TIME
Peabody	2/2/00	1:00 PM
Boston	2/15/00	8:30 AM
Andover	2/23/00	1:00 PM
Peabody	3/9/00	8:30 AM
Swansea	3/15/00	1:00 PM
West Bridgewater	3/29/00	8:30 AM
Cambridge	4/6/00	1:00 PM
Northborough	4/18/00	8:30 AM
Northampton	4/26/00	1:00 PM
Andover	5/10/00	8:30 AM
Cambridge	5/16/00	1:00 PM
Wareham	6/1/00	8:30 AM
Northborough	6/7/00	1:00 PM
Pittsfield	6/21/00	8:30 AM
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Boston	7/20/00	8:30 AM
Wareham	7/26/00	1:00 PM
Needham	8/16/00	8:30 AM
Cambridge	8/22/00	1:00 PM
Yarmouth	9/20/00	8:30 AM
Boston	9/26/00	1:00 PM
Northborough	10/12/00	8:30 AM
West Springfield	10/18/00	1:00 PM
Andover	10/31/00	8:30 AM
Boston	11/9/00	1:00 PM
Peabody	11/30/00	8:30 AM
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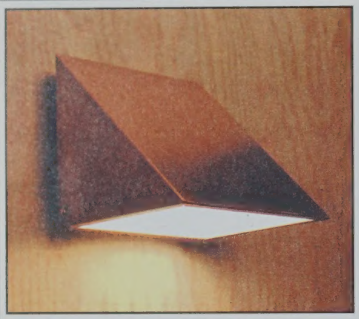
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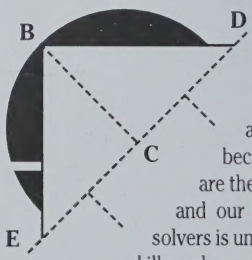
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Letters

In "Studs Terkel or Martha Stewart?" (Fall 1999), Michael Pyatok raises an issue that one rarely sees addressed: the differences in values between the residents of low-income neighborhoods and those responsible for the policies which shape them.

I believe that for the most part this is not a product of elitist-esthetic "collusion" but rather a manifestation of those twin devils — ignorance and arrogance. In my experience, it is always the same cultural "class" of people who make the decisions — whether about vacation homes, school programs, or low-income housing. What they bring to all of these endeavors is their undying belief in the rightness of their values. What they need is a willingness to entertain the validity of someone else's realities. Pyatok's own career is ample evidence that one doesn't have to be poor and a minority to empathize with and understand the needs of low-income people.

Having said this, though, I wonder whether the solution is as clear-cut — "Studs or Martha?" — as Pyatok makes it out to be. First, many businesses like those he describes already exist in the very neighborhoods he is talking about. A quick tour of Brooklyn, for example, would demonstrate dysfunctional social and physical environments despite the presence of these businesses. Perhaps there are not enough of these businesses? If not, why not? Is it because of other factors — social, educational, or cultural? Are there models in contemporary American cities for low-income people to learn from? Are the examples referred to in the article consistent with our culture? Or do they represent cultural models that are essentially foreign to contemporary America?

Pyatok is correct in making a vital link between the economic well-being of a neighborhood and its physical and social well-being. The benefits of developing entry-level businesses (and jobs) at or near home seem almost axiomatic. To me, it is just as axiomatic that different cultural groups need different models. Without the design of a business model, I doubt the design of an urban design or housing model will be successful.

Charles Boxenbaum AIA
New York City

Unlike Matthew Kiefer, I do not think that community process was better in the past and is now "reactionary" ("Two Views" Winter 1999). Nor are community activists the only players who are parochial. (They are insofar that it is difficult to get communities interested in projects that they don't see directly affecting them.)

People have been fighting projects they consider harmful with the same tools as always — community and political pressure. Indeed, unfortunate projects date from a time when there wasn't opposition. The John Hancock Building is beautiful, but it blocks the light from Trinity Church's south windows during the morning service and has created an intolerable wind tunnel. The interests of the church and Copley Square were not addressed by persons professionally trained to do so, because the only ones involved were those in the employ of the insurance company.

Fred Mauet's comments about transportation deserve discussion. Public transportation will never be an option as long as perks for private automobiles remain signs of status. Parking space at the office now extends to curbside "valet parking," swallowing spaces in alarming numbers. To refer to Kiefer's charge of parochialism: Where lies the community interest here?

What makes Boston such a mecca? The very downtown neighborhoods that have been sav — with a struggle.

Bettina A. Norton
Editor and publisher
The Beacon Hill/Back Bay Chronicle
Boston

The discussion on the architecture of the Seaport District (Winter 1999) was a good o but it lacked one necessary bold statement: "Where is the urban design?" In discussing architecture without urban context, we are le with an empty, subjective discussion of brick versus steel, and we will never see "that pushi of [the architect's] energy against the context of the city" which Robert Campbell describe and which all of us agree is what makes Bost Boston.

Boston is a city of districts defined by distinc urban patterns. We are spending billions to repair tears in this fabric such as the Central Artery and City Hall Plaza. The real problen the Seaport — that no architectural decision

l affect — is that we are on the brink of creating yet
ther urban-design problem for future generations to
ggle with instead of taking the opportunity to create a
athtaking solution. The future is currently being laid
t piecemeal by a very small number of wealthy property
ners who are not on speaking terms with one another.
meone needs to step in!

e BSA Seaport Focus Team, a team of more than
volunteer architects and urban designers, provided
tastic urban design recommendations. Carol Burns
A and Hubert Murray AIA issued amazingly similar
delines simultaneously in June 1998. And the city
blished a "Public Realm Plan" for the district last year
t is being ignored, even mocked. Boston is ripe
h talent but lacking in bold and progressive vision.
e can do better.

ob Higginbottom
ston

ISH TO THANK Jeremiah Eck FAIA for his article
he Alternative House" (Winter 1999), which deserves
ad discussion. I would like to offer some possible
lanations for the scarcity of architect-designed houses.
er the last 50 years:

Architects have gradually abandoned their traditional
sition as arbiters between builders who want to
ild less for more money, and owners who want to
ild more for less money. This function has been
umed by developers who have an inherent conflict
interest in this equation.

Architects have gradually given up their traditional
e as esthetic experts.

Architects have gradually relinquished their job of
erpreting building codes. This function has been
umed by municipal bureaucrats despite the fact that
hitects bear the legal responsibility for any conse-
ences of that interpretation.

Developers have increasingly taken architectural design
ay from architects despite the fact that most developers
not possess training and knowledge in that area.

Residential clients have gradually lost their trust in
hitects as partners in the design and construction of
ir homes.

hatever the reasons, the results are indeed very sad.
cently, many communities have been disturbed by the
lux of so-called "monster houses." This problem is a
od example of architecture without architects. It shows
t developers cannot create the quality of design and
nstruction achieved by the collaboration of owners and
hitects. The architectural profession was created for
y good reasons, and I predict that in the new century
hitects will regain some of their traditional power. But
y will have to fight for it.

atol Zukerman AIA
wton, MA

JEREMIAH ECK FAIA ASKS, "Why aren't architects more involved in production houses?" ("The Alternative House" Winter 1999.) The common wisdom among design professionals is that the public perceives that architects' fees are too high, their designs too expensive, and their services too rigid and inflexible. I believe that the actual reasons are in fact quite different and more disturbing.

The majority of new houses are built within the context of land subdivisions. These new homes are usually expensive, particularly in the Northeast, where such homes routinely sell for more than half a million dollars. The buyers of these homes are often highly educated people, who can appreciate architecture when they travel abroad or visit Back Bay, but who do not desire, require or demand architectural designs in their own residential environment. This is not due to lack of education or sophistication, or due to the cost of architectural services. I believe it is due to a different esthetic and social context in single-family subdivisions.

There is an implied social contract within residential subdivisions. This social contract requires conformity, in order to create a homogeneous environment in which no single house stands out. Although some choices of materials, colors, and details are allowed (to avoid monotony), the need for conformity discourages distinctive and unique architectural designs. It is not difficult to understand that a house designed by an architect, in a milieu of several "builder design" houses, would seem out of context and lead to an uncomfortable relationship between the structures and the residents.

The more difficult question is: Why are architects rarely retained to establish consistent design standards for entire new subdivisions? Although it may be hard for architects to understand or accept, I believe that the residents of subdivisions have developed a new esthetic, which appreciates the appearance of these "builder" or "production" houses and accepts these designs as a desirable standard. They are quite satisfied with their purchase and do not demand or want designs by architects.

Education and advertising aren't enough to change all this. But an overhaul of our wasteful, sprawl-inducing land-use policies to promote more ecologically sensitive growth can lead to new residential environments and social contexts that will demand new esthetics. Only then will houses designed by architects be valued, appreciated, and necessary.

Willy Sclarsic AIA
Boston



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Letters may be edited for clarity and length and must include your name, address, and daytime telephone number. Length should not exceed 300 words.



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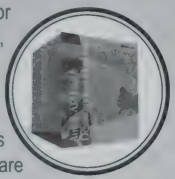
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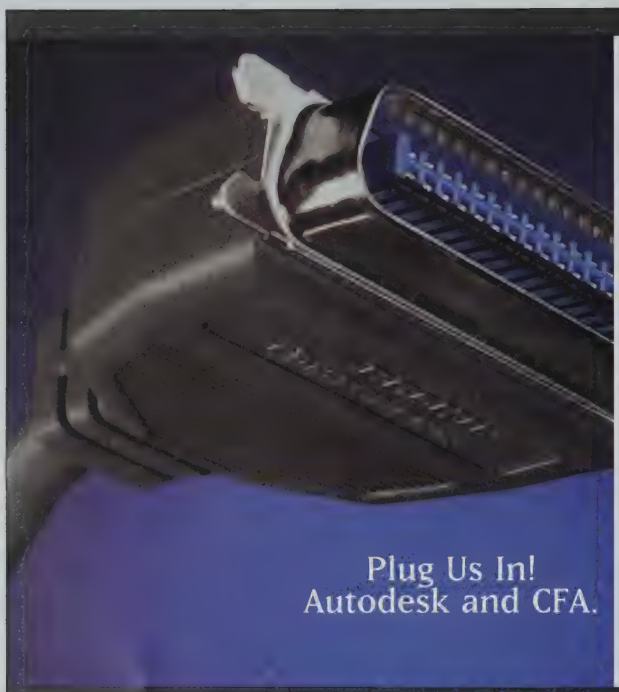
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Places in Time

Good design can create memorable places, but sometimes history intervenes, giving a building or landscape significance that its designer could never imagine. *ArchitectureBoston* asked some well-known New Englanders for their recollections of a special place in a special moment in time. Their wonderful responses underscore the power of architecture to symbolize personal and cultural memory.

Egleston Square — Jackson Square	**Mossik Hacobian** Executive director Urban Edge
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	**Laura A. Johnson** President Massachusetts Audubon Society
The Charles River Esplanade	**Hubie Jones** Special assistant to the chancellor for urban affairs University of Massachusetts Boston
Shanghai's Bund	**Vivien Li** Executive director The Boston Harbor Association
Boston Symphony Hall	**Stephen Lord** Music director Boston Lyric Opera
Route 2 East	**Paul Master-Karnik** Director DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park
The Boston Athenæum	**Jane C. Nylander** President Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities
70 Bedford Street, Greenwich Village	**Noel Paul Stookey** Musician Peter, Paul and Mary
Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art	**Jane Swift** Lieutenant Governor Massachusetts



Photo: Peter Vanderwarker, collection of the Boston Athenæum

The Boston Athenæum

by Jane C. Nylander

Gray light flooding into a huge window on a cold winter day. A few withered leaves rustling in the trees outside. The silent graves in the churchyard below, unvisited by tourists at this time of year. Seated with my back to the window, the huge volume of old newspapers propped on an easel in front of me, my eyes occasionally wandered to the walls of books that surrounded me in the dimly lit room, and I drank in the beauty and sweet scent of the glorious bouquet of flowers centered on my work table. I was newly engaged and gloriously in love; all of my senses were heightened. With one light focused on the *Columbian Centinel*, I read voraciously and made careful notes about the world of Boston in the 1830s, trying to recapture the commercial world of Boston as it was known by Asa Knight, whose Dummerston, Vermont country store we were planning to recreate at Old Sturbridge Village.

As I worked, the shadows in the great room and the view out the window kept teasing me. The past seemed so close and ye so far. The people I was reading about had walked on Tremor Street, within sight of the place where I was sitting. They had shopped in the very stores I was learning about and attended plays and auction sales within a few blocks of where I was now reading. They, too, had listened to the tolling of the King's Chapel bell. The people seemed to beckon to me from the street and the graveyard, but I could not go out and talk with them. As evening drew near in the late afternoons, the shadows lengthened, street lights came on, and people seemed to hover in the corners of the room, still out of reach. For more than a hundred years, historians and writers have enjoyed the distinguished architecture, natural light, rare books, lavish flowers, and tradition of scholarship at the Boston Athenæum. For one special season in my life, I was privileged to immerse myself in all of it.

Jane C. Nylander is president of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities. She is the author of *Our Own Snug Fireside: Images of the New Englan Home 1760-1860* and *Fabrics for Historic Buildings* and more than eighty articles an reviews. Her newest book, *Windows on the Past: Four Centuries of New England Homes*, will be published in May.



Photo: Peter Vanderwarker, courtesy Bruce Fowle Architects

assachusetts Museum Contemporary Art (MASS MoCA)

Jane Swift

riving through the familiar downtown of North lams one evening last spring, I noticed that the hts were on in the old Sprague mill buildings. For ore than a decade, those buildings sat in darkness ever since Sprague Electric left town and took a ce of my hometown with it. But on this night, e mill's windows glowed, and its distinctive clock wer was lit and keeping proper time.

that moment, I recognized that the rebirth of the mmunity I loved had become reality. That old andoned mill — once a textile mill, later an ctronics plant — had been transformed into the assachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art. As a ung, freshman state senator, I had believed that nodern-art museum would bring a new spirit my hometown, that it would bring the cultural d economic soul back to this site.

y mother's parents had worked at Sprague for ore than 90 years between them, and tens of ousands of people fed their families by going to rk there every single day. Today, MASS MoCA atures cutting-edge art and new technology. But as ooked at the 19th-century clock tower and ose magnificent buildings, where most of the old ick walls and wood floors have been preserved, I iew the museum would also honor an important rt of North Adams' past. Inside and outside, the vakening of the old mill site once again symbolizes pe and opportunity.

e Swift is lieutenant governor of Massachusetts.
e was born and raised in North Adams.

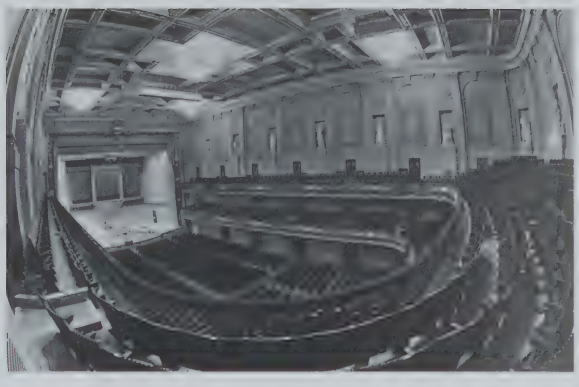


Photo: Bradford Herzog

Boston Symphony Hall

by Stephen Lord

As we all know, the teenage years are fraught with uncertainty, fears, indecision, and rebellion. What an adult takes for granted, a teenager finds exotic. What an adult considers just a familiar melody, the adolescent might hear as the captivating song of the sirens.

This was the case for me as I entered Symphony Hall for the first time at the age of 15 to hear Swedish soprano Birgit Nilsson, the most famous Wagnerian soprano of our time. I had just read a book on the scandals in the life of Isadora Duncan and had been captivated by her reaction to the naked statues that surround the Hall's interior. As a teenager, I found the prospect of seeing them for myself especially inviting!

I went with my mother's sister, my first piano teacher. It was intended to be a pleasant outing for the two of us. But looking over the proscenium in America's greatest architectural hall of culture and seeing the names of composers whose names I was just beginning to pronounce and "meet" became, for me, a magic moment in time. When I saw those names, I knew that somehow I belonged in some sort of conversation with them. They made me comfortable in a way a teenager normally isn't — they made me feel not quite so alone. I wanted to meet, know, talk to them. But if I couldn't, I knew I could try to express to others what I think these composers wanted to say.

It was then that music became an imperative, not an interrogative, in my life path.

Stephen Lord is the music director of Boston Lyric Opera.

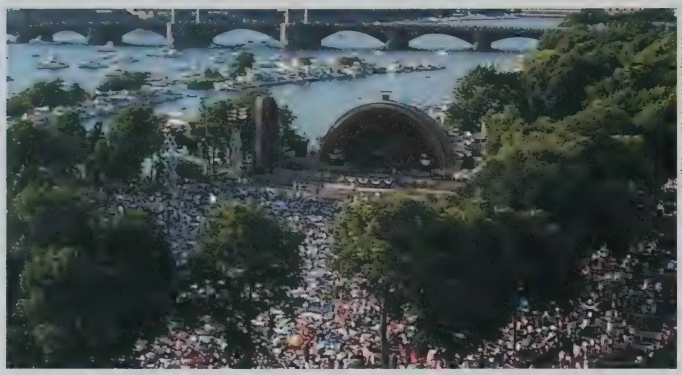


Photo courtesy of Boston's Fourth of July, Inc.



The Charles River Esplanade
by Hubie Jones

One of my special places in Boston is the lawn in front of the Hatch Shell. This magnificent greenspace alongside the Charles River is a mecca for walking, jogging, biking, gathering, picnicking, and concert listening. On many a Fourth of July, I have enjoyed the Boston Pops Orchestra concert and the spectacular fireworks display that punctuates its conclusion.

An overflow crowd of 200,000 people became a part of world history at the Esplanade on June 23, 1990, when they greeted Nelson Mandela, who had recently been released from 27 years in prison. At 3:00 PM, I arrived at the WCVB-TV booth, perched high above the crowd, where I joined anchors Chet Curtis and Natalie Jacobson to provide commentary for this event. On this brilliant sunlit afternoon, I was overwhelmed by the rare sight of a diverse sea of humanity: multi-racial, multi-ethnic, and intergenerational. Each person had come to this place eager to see this African leader who could not be broken by a brutal system of oppression and who had emerged from imprisonment with a spirit of generosity and reconciliation. I was thrilled to spot two of my daughters, ages 15 and 18, who had left home at 4:30 AM to secure a good vantage place for the scheduled 4:00 PM event.

As the appointed hour drew near, the very orderly and festive crowd grew restless. When Nelson Mandela finally mounted the stage, there was an explosion of joy that I had never witnessed before. The experience was at once visual, physical, emotional, and spiritual. It felt as if the TV booth was trembling. As Mandela pumped his right fist over his head and danced to the music, the audience swayed to and fro, arms extended to the sky, conveying its great love, admiration and appreciation to one of the greatest leaders of the 20th century.

I was overcome. I was moved to tears. Many viewers who watched my televised commentary said they never saw me more exuberant and alive. It was a special moment of hope because I knew deep down inside that Nelson Mandela would return home after his triumphal tour of the United States and bring a black-majority government to South Africa at last.

Now whenever I am on the Esplanade near the Hatch Shell, I see in my mind's eye the exhilarating happening that occurred there on that brilliant June afternoon, a special moment in a special place in Boston.



Hubie Jones is the special assistant to the chancellor for urban affairs at the University of Massachusetts Boston.



Photo © Landslides, Alex S. MacLean

oute 2 East

y Paul Master-Karnik

came to the Boston area about 15 years ago in order to ssume the directorship of DeCordova Museum and Sculpture ark in Lincoln. Having spent the previous 35 years of my life xclusively in the New York metropolitan area, this geographic elocation was more than a simple matter of moving 400 or so iles to the north — it was a major cultural shift. New York nd Boston are not the same, or even closely related.

he visual image that represents the physical, personal, and rofessional center of this major transformation in my life is a nall stretch of highway — Route 2 near the Arlington exits, astbound from the western suburbs toward the city of Boston. is a trip that I typically make several times a week now, and ne that I first made on May 2, 1984. At a particular bend of ie highway there unfolds for a few brief seconds the entire cyline of the city of Boston, rather compact and neatly rganized in ascending height order toward the middle. This recise snapshot of Boston, ingested at 50 or so miles an hour, as remained with me as a total encapsulation of my experience f the city — as profoundly moving as Dorothy's first glimpse f the Emerald City. It is a flash of understanding the city as oth accomplishment and aspiration.

his space of asphalt never ceases to open a window of ıtrospection onto my emotional life. The very brevity of the xperience of the space probably enhances its power. This iew of Boston is so tidy and moderately scaled (so unlike the nwieldy New York), that it is comforting to pass through it, ; though through a gate which protects and defends.



Paul Master-Karnik is the director of DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park in Lincoln, Massachusetts.

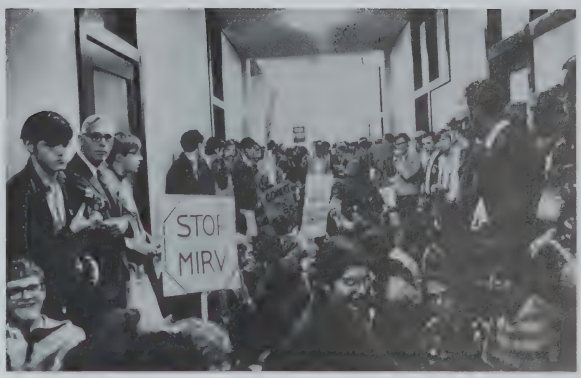


Photo: courtesy of MIT Museum

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

by Laura A. Johnson

Some of my earliest memories are of the MIT campus. My family moved to the Boston area when I was one year old and my father accepted an assistant professorship at the Sloan School. My father — and therefore my family — have remained a part of the MIT community to this day. So the Institute's buildings — from the rink where I learned to skate, to the distinctive MIT dome — loom large in my memories. But one particular scene from the early 1970s stands out: the student occupation of the office of the MIT president. The president was my father.

I was a young teen during this time of great turmoil on college campuses across the country. Although we had lived with tensions on campus for many months, the occupation of my father's office was unnerving — no one knew what was going to happen. Unrest on so many campuses had made every incident a potential flashpoint for violence. The occupation lasted several days, and I remember walking late one afternoon from our on-campus house through the corridors of MIT's main buildings until I reached one of the staircases that would take me up to my father's office on the second floor. By chance, there was no one else around; I stood on those stairs feeling alone in that massive building, wondering what I should do. Then I heard chanting coming from the floor above: "Ho, Ho, Ho Chi Minh, NLF is going to win" (a standard anti-war chant promoting the National Liberation Front). Marchers were in the halls above me, coming closer and closer to where I waited on the stairs. Was I really in danger? Probably not. But I felt a *frisson* of fear and I fled.

Since that time, now almost 30 years ago, I still find myself thinking of that otherworldly moment — the sense of threat, the disembodied voices — when I see the MIT dome dominating its stretch of the Charles.



Laura A. Johnson is president of the Massachusetts Audubon Society.



Photo: Vivien Li



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Shanghai's Bund

By Vivien Li

As a Chinese-American, I was thrilled to be part of a US delegation that visited China last November to mark the 20th anniversary of exchanges between the US and the People's Republic of China. All of us had been to China before, but none of us was quite prepared for the surprises that awaited us in Shanghai.

We arrived in downtown Shanghai in early evening. As we turned onto the Bund, Shanghai's waterfront boulevard, there was a collective gasp at the beauty and majesty of this famous promenade. The waterfront, reconstructed in 1993, was brightly lit, its stately buildings showcased with spotlights, like dazzling jewels. Thousands of people, including families with small children and their grandparents, were out on this typical weeknight strolling, having their pictures taken, looking at the night skyline. The waterfront was breathtaking in its physical beauty and vitality, something which we in Boston are striving for as we develop our own waterfront over the next decade.

Early next morning, a very different vitality had overtaken the Bund. By 6 AM, hundreds of people in small groups were again on the Bund, this time engaged in *tai chi*. I watched through light fog as these mostly older citizens silently practiced their deliberate, centuries-old movements against the dramatic backdrop of European architecture on one side and floating junks and barges on the other. I suddenly remembered my grandmother, who came to the United States in the early 1960s; she rose early every morning to do her "Chinese exercises." As I stood in Shanghai that morning, I finally understood the serenity that she and so many others found in those movements, in a world changing so quickly around them.



Vivien Li is the executive director of The Boston Harbor Association.

70 Bedford Street, Greenwich Village

by Noel Paul Stookey

"the house song." it began as a song about a house. our house. the house that betty and i had turned into a home. the water-softener factory that i bought for $38,000 in 1962 and was referred to as "stookey's folly" by betty's folks — until of course the bargain was legitimatized by discovering the brick nogging (wooden separators between the old bricks) that made up the rea walls of the house. the architect, herbert lipmann, was noticeably excited — we found nogging he said — brick nogging — that means the building is old — quite old — sometime early in the 1800s — I'm doing some research he said — there's even a chance that the building will qualify as an "historic site"— providence again — how many times have i become involved in what seemed to be a simple matter of the heart only to discover later some unseen significance — and what a great neighbor-hood. it's greenwich village. west village. more serene here than the maelstrom of art and cultural tension that whirls through the coffeehouses of bleeker and mcdougal in these early '60s.

clifford odets' "golden boy" lives two doors away. edna st. vincen millay lived in the "narrows," the tiny little 20-foot-wide house across the street. bill and cora baird and the puppets are around the corner and there's a garage — well, actually an alleyway just wide enough for the jaguar xke that betty and i received for our wedding present from peter, mary, albert, and john in 1963. but that was three years ago. it's 1966 and thanks to the persistence of the architect, there's a brass plaque on the front of 70 bedford street that tells passersby that john roome, a sailmaker and keeper of the debtor prison, lived here in the year 1806 and that reference to him may be found in the city records. the english sports car has become a sedan and will soon become a station wagon which will then become a camper but it's late at night now and elizabeth our first-born daughter is asleep on the third floor.



It's 1999 now, and our first-born daughter has just delivered her first-born son at our home in Maine.

Noel Paul Stookey, of Peter, Paul and Mary, lives in western Massachusetts and Maine. "The House Song" was first recorded on *Album 1700.*



Photo: Geoscapes, courtesy of Urban Edge

gleston Square — Jackson Square

y Mossik Hacobian

)ne night last November, I went to meet Betty ;reene, a resident leader at Academy Homes I ı the Jackson Square section of Roxbury. .s I approached her door, another resident, the ıatriarch of her family, was leaving Betty's partment. Considering her reserved demeanor n all previous encounters, I was pleasantly ırprised when she enthusiastically greeted me ith a loud "Hi!" I knew she was going through traumatic family crisis. Also, we had just ompleted renovations at her apartment which ad meant weeks of disruption to her family's ormal routine. And so I was even more struck hen she went on to say, "I *love* my apartment." hose few words brought a lot of warmth n this cold night. They signaled hope and ptimism.

uch optimism is increasingly the norm in the alf-mile stretch of Columbus Avenue between gleston and Jackson squares where the Jamaica lain and Roxbury neighborhoods of Boston ıeet. It wasn't always like this. It began in 1983 hen Dimock-Bragdon Apartments came alive as 4 families moved into a long-abandoned block f brick rowhouses renovated by Urban Edge. continues this year with the completion of :novations at the 202-unit Academy Homes I ıat operates under resident control. Right now a ıture is being created by a community in the abit of making great presents of imagined ıtures.

After almost two decades, this area has been transformed by the people — white, black, Latino — who live and work here. The world has changed in this part of Boston. What was a dividing line between people of different race and class is now a common ground. If we can do this in such a short time, we can do anything. The future we are creating is better than the past some imagine fondly.

A special place in a special moment in time? The place is *here* and the time is *now*.



Mossik Hacobian is the executive director of Urban Edge, a non-profit community development corporation serving Jamaica Plain, Roxbury, and surrounding Boston neighborhoods.

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Beethoven asked Mozart.



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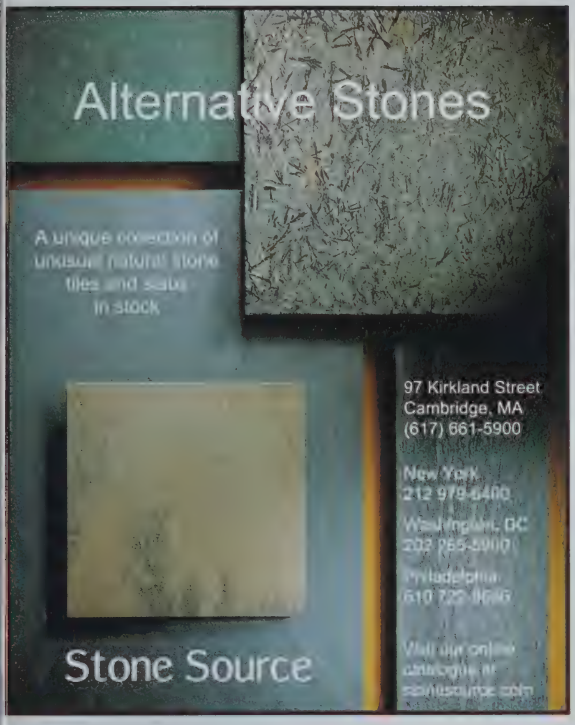
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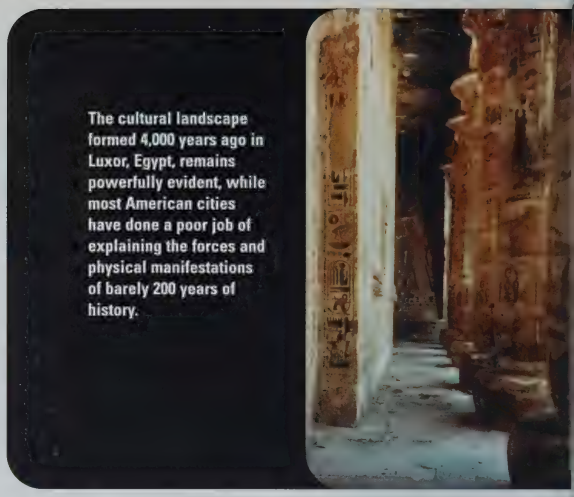
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The City Transparent

by Jonathan S. Lane AIA, AICP



The cultural landscape formed 4,000 years ago in Luxor, Egypt, remains powerfully evident, while most American cities have done a poor job of explaining the forces and physical manifestations of barely 200 years of history.

The late Kevin Lynch wrote *What Time is this Place?* to explore the role of time in our perception of the city. I'd rephrase the question to: "Why is this place?" The passage of time imprints the city, leaving visual clues to the past. Could we design ways to make the city more like a book — telling us its story and clarifying the important forces that have shaped it? If citizens of all ages could "read" a city and grasp its urban history, they would appreciate how historical forces have affected the built environment they experience and why certain places and settings are important.

Interpretation of the history and context of special places appears in museums, in historical landmarks, and in national parks, but is curiously absent in much of the everyday built environment. Occasional wall plaques explain the venues of historical events or birthplaces of the famous, but offer little interpretation of the meaning of larger districts or cultural landscapes. Unfortunately, charming cityscapes are not often self-explanatory and much of their meaning may lie hidden.

If we could communicate that hidden meaning — the "why" and "how" of the environment we see today — the public would realize the inherent value in settings it often takes for granted. "The City Transparent" is a metaphor for an urban condition that would enable residents to "read" their environment. The challenge for designers is to reveal the underlying narrative that explains how urban settings came to be, helping the public see through the distractions of modern urban life.

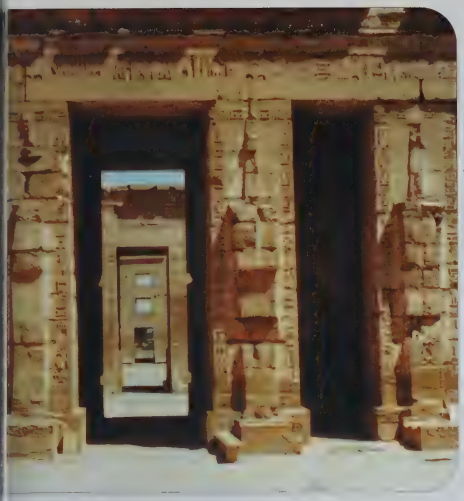
I had not realized how opaque our everyday environment is until I visited a setting that is truly transparent. During several recent visits to Luxor, Egypt, I was struck by the irony that a cultural landscape formed 4,000 years ago remains powerfully evident despite the forces of contemporary urbanization, while most American cities have done a poor job of explaining the forces and physical manifestations of barely 200 years of history.

The key elements of Luxor communicate an order of space, time, and culture that coincides with systems of belief and ritual. This order starts with orientation — the Nile flows on a north-south axis and the sun's movement is east-west. Influenced by these axes, as well as by the seasonal flooding of the Nile that determined cultivation of the land, a complex culture evolved, expressed by the siting and design of buildings and spaces. On the east bank of the Nile, where the sun rose, was the city of the living, with its opulent temples. On the west bank of the Nile, where the sun disappears, was the Theban Necropolis, the city of the dead. Canals ran east and west through these two settings and were used for processionals symbolizing the journey from life to death.

Within this readily understandable landscape, the buildings themselves are like books, with lengthy hieroglyphics on their walls that tell stories of their builders and their culture. The buildings left such a clear record of their sponsorship that each succeeding ruler felt compelled to add his own story, often purposely obscuring or defacing the message of those who came before.

But ancient Luxor represents a society in which politics, religion, economics, and culture were seamlessly integrated. How, other than through scholarship and pedagogy, can a contemporary city be made more transparent and understandable? I offer a few possibilities:

Explain the city and its places through central exhibits and interpretation. Visitor centers and exhibits are used in national parks and other important settings to provide a controlled overview of complex settings, to explain big stories, and to motivate visitors to go out and discover their nuance and reality on site. One example is the National Historical Park in Lowell, Massachusetts, where the visitor center helps tourists understand how the textile industry shaped the form of the city. There is no central museum of the city of Boston. Maybe it's time to think about such a facility — a museum that is more than a repository, that reaches out to visitors and residents, encouraging them to



Photos courtesy of ICON architecture

liscover what makes (and has made) the city work. Recent initiatives of the Bostonian Society and other ocal stakeholders have great promise in addressing his need.

Create paths of discovery that make the city peak. Tours or walking routes can provide self-guided exploration, supplemented by wayside exhibits or walking guides to communicate essential tories. Boston's Freedom Trail is an excellent example, as are tours offered by Boston By Foot and he Boston History Collaborative. With more than 4 million in corporate support, Heritage Trails New York has developed a set of walking tours, guidebooks, and related media for themed routes hrough historic districts in Lower Manhattan. Museum exhibits have taken advantage of low-requency radio to lead visitors through exhibits; his technology could be exploited in an outdoor rban environment, creating powerful narratives hat could capture the imagination of visitors and esidents alike. Could a partnership of public and rivate interests in Boston develop and sponsor a roader set of tours, wayside exhibits, and audio rograms? We have a wealth of potential subjects: ur maritime history and relationship to the harbor; he development of ethnic and other neighbor-oods; even our penchant for transforming the face f the city.

Design symbolic spaces that explain how and why the city grew. Public spaces can be designed o be multi-functional — to support activity, o be attractive, and to carry a message. Boston's Holocaust Memorial is a powerful example, although it is not "grounded" in our city's history. Memphis' Mud Island, explaining the role of the mighty Mississippi River, is another well-known venue. In Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania, a park interprets the site's former role as the terminus for the Pennsylvania Canal, shaping activities to reinforce and explain its former function in the community, while also supporting recreation and children's play. Can we design Boston's public spaces to incorporate narratives explaining their history and significance? The large open spaces that will be formed with removal of the Central Artery offer ideal opportunities.

Bostonians are justifiably proud of their efforts to protect their historic structures; as a result, the city has a sizable presence in the National Register of Historic Places. But what about the overall historic form of Boston, which is surely unique and significant? It is ironic that the current concern for "planning" associated with large-scale transformations in our downtown and seaport districts has not been accompanied by a more systematic city-wide effort to define and protect what is special about Boston. With greater "transparency," residents and community leaders alike would have a greater understanding of the city, and they would demand the protection of its special qualities.

For the last 25 years, our leaders have branded Boston as a "world-class city." How about raising our sights a bit for the next century and seeking designation as a World Heritage City?

Although the international community currently recognizes more than 100 "World Heritage Cities," none is located within the continental United States. Of all American cities, surely Boston qualifies for this honor. If the mayor and the business community jointly supported and secured the designation of Boston as a World Heritage City, the benefits would obviously include our enhanced attractiveness as a visitor and business destination. But perhaps even more significant than the economic impact would be the civic impact: our increased understanding of the uniqueness of this city.

Preservation and development are complementary forces that need not work at cross-purposes. Even as we re-invent parts of our city, such as the South Boston Seaport and the Central Artery Corridor, it is not too late to make a systematic effort to communicate and make more transparent what is special about its form and structure. ■■■

Jonathan S. Lane AIA, AICP is president of ICON architecture, inc. in Boston. His firm's urban design and planning work has included many projects featuring significant heritage resources, including the comprehensive plan for Luxor (Egypt), Lowell National Historical Park, and the Hollidaysburg (Pennsylvania) Canal Basin Park.

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Remember This

Memorial mania in America

by Deborah K. Dietsch

Deborah K. Dietsch is the art and architecture critic of the *Sun-Sentinel* in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. This article is based on a presentation to BSA members of the AIA College of Fellows.





lemory has become a tourist industry as millions of Americans ock to honor the dead. More people now visit the memorial to anklin Delano Roosevelt than any outdoor attraction in ashington, DC. They wander through its granite-enclosed tdoor rooms, snap photos in front of its statuary, and buy uvenirs in the gift shop. No matter that this seven-acre complex the banks of the Potomac defies FDR's wish for a memorial e size of his desk.

hese days, it is not enough to erect a simple statue in mmemoration of a person or event. Memorials have become as rge and complex as small museums. Four years ago, when the orld War II memorial was proposed for a prominent site on e National Mall, its sponsors wanted to include spaces for hibitions and meetings until two federal commissions nixed the ea. Such functional requirements weren't so unusual: the omen in Military Service Memorial, sited across the Potomac iver, managed to sandwich a gallery and auditorium into an andoned stone hemicycle at the foot of Arlington National emetery.

lemorials are expected to be not only educational, but also ntertaining. Boston's Holocaust Memorial, **2** designed by an Francisco architect Stanley Saitowitz for a traffic island near aneuil Hall, invites the public to promenade through glass towers at emit steam from glowing grates. No one seems to care that ese structures, commemorating one of the most horrific events history, are placed in the middle of a busy street. Theater, parently, is more important than reverence.

hat a difference a century makes. In the 1890s, Augustus Saint-audens was content to sculpt a *bas-relief* of marching soldiers r his monument to Robert Gould Shaw and the Massachusetts ifty-fourth Regiment **1** on the Boston Common. Within a gnified granite frame designed by Charles McKim, Saint-audens portrayed the African-American Civil War unit with ch affecting humanity that his memorial still moves us.

oday's figurative memorials do not stir our emotions in the same ay. Consider Woburn, Massachusetts, sculptor Robert Shure's ish Famine Memorial **5** *(photo, page 26)* built at the corner of School and Washington streets in Boston to commemorate the one million victims of the 1845–1850 potato famine. Its paired statuary of Irish families — one suffering and one surviving — expresses the tragedy through outstretched limbs and anguished expressions. But these gestures are too hackneyed to make us think about their plight afresh. Perhaps too much time has passed for anyone to capture such events with anything but clichés. And why a monument to the potato famine 150 years after the event?

It seems that anyone with the cause and the cash is building a memorial somewhere. Japanese-Americans interned during World War II have successfully lobbied Congress for a memorial park near the US Capitol. Those who perished in the ValueJet air crash now have a memorial in the Everglades near Miami. Families of the high-school students shot in Columbine, Colorado, are now creating a commemorative quilt.

Such memorial mania, of course, is not new. A similar commemoration craze took hold at the end of the 19th century, with numerous statues erected to the heroes of the Civil War. What is different today is that memorials no longer represent a nation united, but one divided. They have become totems to special-interest groups rather than to national causes. They put a permanent spin on history.

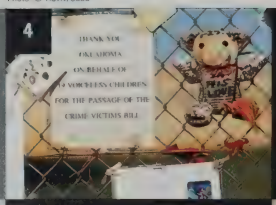
A perfect example is the FDR Memorial, where Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt are filtered through the lens of current political correctness: The first lady is shown without her fur boa to please animal-rights activists; FDR is shown without his cigarette holder in deference to the anti-tobacco lobby. And disabled activists have lobbied Congress to add a statue of FDR in his wheelchair at the entrance to the memorial, even though the president never wanted the American public to see him in the chair.

Few memorials today are completed without such compromise. One need only look at the statuary that now surrounds the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to realize that even the most critically successful designs are not always acceptable to their constituencies. But what pleases the sponsors doesn't always please the public. At the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, people line up to visit Maya Lin's black wall, not Frederick Hart's soldiers.

Photo: © Hawn/Saba



3



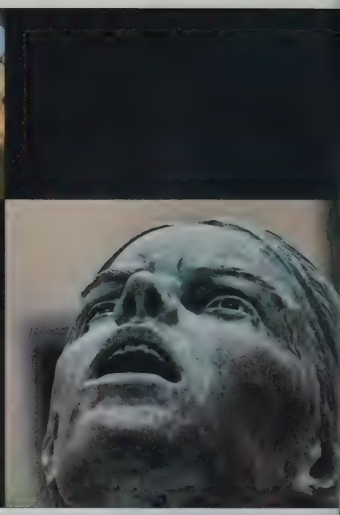


Photo: Steve Rosenthal

Photo: *Boston Globe*

That such a moving, powerful design as Lin's could be built by Vietnam Veterans, a once reviled group, has inspired many other disenfranchised groups to build memorials in order to call attention to their own causes. One of the most successful is the AIDS Memorial Quilt. Conceived in 1985 by San Francisco gay-rights activist Cleve Jones, it comprises thousands of panels made by groups and individuals who choose the imagery and the materials. The result is a vast folk-art flag and teaching tool created through the collaborative art of quilting.

Another memorial similarly tied to education is the Civil Rights Memorial gracing the front of the Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery, Alabama. However, like Boston's Holocaust Memorial, this circular fountain designed by Maya Lin suffers from its location. While the memorial symbolizes the mission of the law center, it has no relationship to the actual locations of the civil-rights struggles.

A more successful response to place is the eloquent Salem Witch Trials Tercentenary Memorial in Salem, Massachusetts,3 by Seattle architect James Cutler FAIA and sculptor Maggie Smith. It fuses art, architecture, and landscape architecture into a sanctuary attuned to its commemorative purpose and place. Placed next to the cemetery where the judge and some of the accusers are buried, the memorial consists of granite walls that are common throughout New England. Within this enclosure are projecting stones, like inverted tombstones, inscribed with the name, age, date, and manner of execution of each of the 20 victims. Like the Vietnam Memorial, there is no accompanying narrative or allegory, only the facts about each of the dead.

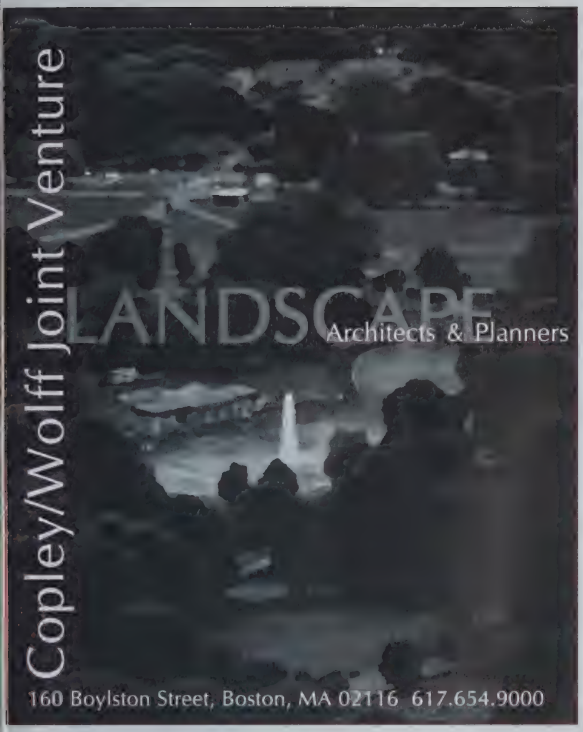
Some of the most poignant memorials are not those designed by architects, but are the result of spontaneous solidarity in the face of tragedy. After the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City was bombed and then demolished in 1995, people began leaving messages, flowers, teddy bears, and other mementos in the chain-link construction fence around the site 4.

Now under construction is a permanent memorial designed by the Butzer Design Partnership of Cambridge, Massachusetts. Its centerpiece is a shallow reflecting pool with gates at either end. On one side of the pool, where the Murrah Building once stood, will stand 168 empty chairs, one for each person who died in the bombing. On the other side, an orchard of fruit trees will honor the rescue workers. A circular wall with the names of the survivors will enclose the only tree to survive the bombing. The ensemble is due to be completed this April 19, five years after the bombing.

But will this memorial, designed to please each constituency touched by this tragedy, be as heartfelt as the decorated fence? The most meaningful memorials are born of true sorrow, created by a group close to the commemorated event. The Vietnam Vets still felt the country's scorn when they embarked upon their memorial; the volunteers who worked to first unveil the AIDS quilt experienced the hate and bigotry associated with the disease.

Distance from the event too often results in compromised vision, as reflected in the newest additions to the national mall in Washington, DC. The Korean Veterans Memorial, built more than 30 years after the war ended, is a mishmash of ghoulish statues, stone wall, and pool. The grandiose World War II Memorial, due to be completed on a site between the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument in a few years — after most of its veterans are dead — has been reduced to a vast sunker plaza at the eastern end of the Reflecting Pool. For the sponsors of many memorials, the act of commemorating has become more important than the individuals and events being commemorated.

We need to step back from our current rush to memorialize and consider the place and purpose of these public symbols. In doing so, we must ask: Education or entertainment? Memorial or museum? Urban park or civic monument? Historic faithfulness or political correctness? These questions must be raised to determine who, what, where, and how we remember. In answering them, we must remember that bricks-and-mortar shrines cannot rewrite history. ■■■



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Photo Above - Laying Steam Lines at Dartmouth College in 1897, Hanover, New Hampshire



The Most Beautiful Building

J. Harleston Parker and his medal

by Jeffrey Stein AIA

The first Harleston Parker award:
Boston Lying-in Hospital
Coolidge and Shattuck

1923



Photo: Peter Vandenwalker

Vent Building #7, Logan Airport
TAMS / Gannet Fleming / URS / Wallace Floyd
Design Group / Stull and Lee

1999 shared award



Photo © Nick Wheeler



Harleston Parker. Said aloud, the sound is of another era. But the effect a man by that name has had on our city's architectural culture is felt even now. By establishing the Harleston Parker Medal three generations ago — a prize that is awarded annually to "the most beautiful building" in the city — he ensured that a debate would continue to this day about beauty, architecture, city-building, and what it means to live in Boston.

The motives for creating such a civic debate in one's own hometown spring from — what, exactly? The truth is that we don't know.

Parker established the prize in 1921, at a time when the United States was still recovering from World War I. Americans were in the throes of Prohibition; the country's economy was still in somewhat of a post-war recession; and the Cunard line had just shifted its port of entry from Boston to New York, slowing the stream of immigrants to this city. While here in New England the "colonial revival" was gathering steam, in continental Europe *l'esprit nouveau* was taking command. Erich Mendelsohn had just completed the Einstein Tower in Potsdam; Mies van der Rohe was drawing glass skyscrapers f Berlin; Walter Gropius was heading a new school called the "Bauhaus"; Le Corbusier was working o his diorama for the Contemporary City — skyscrapers in parks. Perhaps Parker hoped Bostonians would take this opportunity to rethink their own city's architectural future. Or maybe he hoped the medal would spur a retreat to the forms of the past. We'll never know, because he never sai

We do know that on December 5, 1921, J. Harlest Parker wrote a letter to the Boston City Council, offering a gift in memory of his father, also namec Harleston Parker. The terms of the gift — $1,000 be held in perpetual trust to defray the cost of a suitable gold medal — specified only that the may would present a medal to the architect who, in the opinion of the Boston Society of Architects, h "completed the erection…of the most beautiful piece of architecture, building, monument, or structure within the limits of the City of Boston c of the Metropolitan Parks District." The council accepted, and the medal was established. Parker made no mention of the award's intent, nor did h



Lincoln School, Brookline
Graham Gund Architects



Rotch Library, MIT, Cambridge
Schwartz/Silver Architects



left:
Federal Reserve Bank,
Boston
The Stubbins Associates



Design Research International,
Cambridge
Benjamin Thompson Associates Inc.

establish any criteria defining "beautiful." Each year since 1922, a group of 10 people selected by the BSA — a total of nearly 700 citizens — has deliberated the meaning of that exceptional word.

Parker was 48 years old at the time. He had been educated at Harvard College and at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris in the 1890s and was a partner in the successful Boston architecture firm Parker, Thomas and Rice. By 1921, his firm had already designed an eclectic series of Boston landmarks in a variety of architectural styles, including the R.H. Stearns building (1908) and the Georgian-Revival Harvard Club on Commonwealth Avenue (1912). He would go on to design the State Street Trust Company building (1928) and in 1929, just a year before his death, the Art-Deco United Shoe Machinery Building at 138–164 Federal Street.

Throughout the history of the medal, the forces of technology and tradition have always vied for distinction as the cause of beauty. The first medal was awarded to a traditional building, the Boston Lying-In Hospital, by architects Coolidge and Shattuck. By 1927, technology was the reason for citing the Motor Mart Garage in Boston's Park Square, designed by Ralph Harrington Doane. (Today, 72 years later, this elegant machine shed has proven so lasting a monument that it has just been renovated so future generations of Bostonians will be able to park their cars there, too.) A little more than a decade later, in 1939, tradition was the reason to award the medal to Ralph Adams Cram for his Conventual Church of St. Mary and St. John, placed among the sycamores along Memorial Drive in Cambridge. And occasionally (21 years out of the last 78, and as recently as 1998), no award has been given. The years of "no award" have been grouped around times of adverse economic conditions such as in the early years of the Great Depression, during and just after World War II, and as recently as the recession of the early 1990s.

The final Harleston Parker Medal of the 20th century, the award for 1999, combined the forces of technology and tradition. In an innovative, and for the Parker Medal, revolutionary move, the most recent committee awarded the medal jointly to two projects: Vent Building #7 at Logan Airport

Carpenter Visual Arts Center, Harvard University, Cambridge
Le Corbusier in association with Sert, Jackson & Gourley

1964



Photo: © 2000 Peter Vanderwarker

Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge
Perry, Shaw and Hepburn

1943

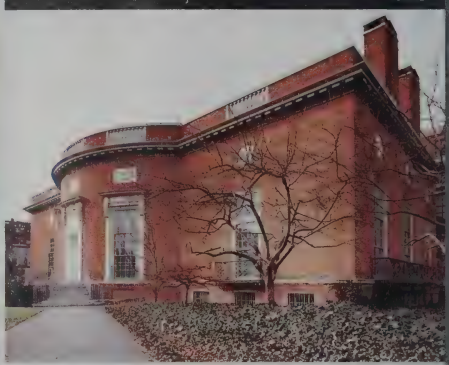


Photo: courtesy Houghton Library, Harvard University

(designed by TAMS Consultants with Wallace Floyd, Stull and Lee, URS, and Gannet Fleming) and the Lincoln School in Brookline (designed by Graham Gund Architects). Recalling the Boston Society of Architects' *Bulletin* of 1921, which suggested the Parker Medal could "stimulate the appreciation of good architecture by the public," the committee tried to focus attention on the complex diversity of architecture as it must be practiced today. The result was joint recognition of an architect (TAMS *et al.*) who partnered (a verb probably unknown in 1921) with an enlightened public agency to create a striking Modernist sculpture that is a working piece of urban infrastructure, and of an architect (Graham Gund Architects) who partnered with an entire community to develop an elegant and thoughtful school in a very sensitive neighborhood context.

Almost a half-century after Parker established his medal, Walter Gropius, a Boston architect by choice, offered his own thoughts on beauty: "In a long life I have become increasingly aware of the fact that the creation and love of beauty not only enrich humans with a great measure of happiness but also bring forth ethical powers. An age which does not give this love for beauty sufficient room remains visually undeveloped; its image remains blurred...." Harleston Parker, and the medal that bears that name, allow us Bostonians the privilege of supporting architects and architecture that do indeed bring a measure of "happiness" and "ethical power" to our city, that make beauty for us a living and ever-changing inspiration.

Jeffrey Stein AIA teaches in the department of architecture at Wentworth Institute of Technology and is the BSA's commissioner of education. He served on the 1999 Harleston Parker Medal committee.

Harleston Parker Awa Winners

- 1923 Coolidge and Shattuck: Boston Lying-in Hospital
- 1924 Parker, Thomas and Rice: John Hancock Building, Boston
- 1925 No award
- 1926 Maginnis & Walsh: Science Building, Boston Colle Brookline
- 1927 Ralph Harrington Doane: Motor Mart, Boston
- 1928 No award
- 1929 No award
- 1930 Richard Shaw: Immaculate Conception Convent, Malden
- 1931 No award
- 1932 No award
- 1933 No award
- 1934 Perry, Shaw and Hepburn: Alice Longfellow Hall, Radcliffe
- 1935 No award
- 1936 Allen, Collens & Willis : Newton City Hall
- 1937 No award
- 1938 Coolidge Shepley Bulfinch and Abbott: Lowell House, Harvard
- 1939 Cram and Ferguson: Conventual Church of St. Mary and St. John, Cambridge
- 1940 No award
- 1941 Richard Shaw: Edward Hatch Memorial Music Shell, Boston
- 1942 No award
- 1943 Perry, Shaw and Hepburn: Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge
- 1944 No award
- 1945 No award
- 1946 Richard Shaw: St. Clement's Church, West Somerville
- 1947 No award
- 1948 No award
- 1949 Richmond & Goldberg: Southern Brookline Communit Center, Temple Emeth, Brookline
- 1950 Cram and Ferguson: John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Co., Berkeley St., Boston
- 1951 Brown, DeMars, Kennedy, Koch & Rapson: 100 Memorial Drive Apartmen Cambridge
- 1952 Arland A. Dirlam: University Lutheran Church, Cambridge

hepley Bulfinch Richardson and
bbott: Allston Burr Lecture Hall,
arvard University, Cambridge

aginnis & Walsh & Kennedy:
azareth Child Care Center, Boston

ugh Stubbins Associates:
ountry School, Weston

ichard Shaw:
rpus Christi Church, Auburndale

nderson Beckwith & Haible:
oston Manufacturers Mutual and
lutual Boiler Machinery Co.
ffice Building, Waltham

idmore, Owings & Merrill
arl Taylor Compton Laboratories,
IT, Cambridge

bsé Luis Sert:
rt Residence at 64 Francis Street,
ambridge

hepley Bulfinch Richardson
nd Abbott: Quincy House, Harvard
niversity, Cambridge

he Architects Collaborative:
cademic Quadrangle, Brandeis
altham

award

award

Corbusier in association with
rt, Jackson & Gourley:
arpenter Visual Arts Center,
arvard University, Cambridge

M. Pei & Associates:
he Earth Sciences Building
he Green Center for Earth
ciences), MIT, Cambridge

rt, Jackson & Gourley:
abody Terrace,
arvard University, Cambridge

rt, Jackson and Associates:
dyke Center,
arvard University, Cambridge

award

llmann, McKinnell and Knowles
association with
ampbell, Aldrich and Nulty,
d Le Messurier Associates:
oston City Hall

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esign Research International,
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ward Larrabee Barnes FAIA and
nery Roth and Sons,
ssociated Architects:
ew England Merchants National
nk Building, Boston

e Architects Collaborative:
ildren's Hospital Medical Center,
oston

njamin Thompson and Associates:
onroe C. Gutman Library,
raduate School of Education,
arvard University, Cambridge

llmann and McKinnell:
oston Five Cents Savings Bank,
oston

M. Pei & Partners, in association
th Araldo Cossutta, Architect:
ristian Science Center,
oston

1976 Sert Jackson & Associates:
Harvard University Science Center,
Cambridge

1977 Benjamin Thompson and Associates:
Quincy Market Building,
Faneuil Hall Marketplace, Boston

1978 The Architects Collaborative:
Josiah Quincy Community School,
Boston

1979 Charles G. Hilgenhurst Associates:
East Cambridge Savings Bank,
Cambridge

1980 I.M. Pei & Partners:
Dreyfus Laboratory, MIT, Cambridge

1981 The Stubbins Associates:
Federal Reserve Bank, Boston

1982 Kallmann McKinnell & Wood:
American Academy of Arts and
Sciences, Cambridge

1983 I.M. Pei & Partners:
John Hancock Tower, Boston

1984 No award

1985 Graham Gund Architects:
Church Court Condominiums,
Boston

1986 No award

1987 Perry Dean Rogers & Partners:
Wellesley College Science Center

1988 Koetter, Kim & Associates:
Codex World Headquarters, Canton

1989 Kallmann McKinnell & Wood:
Hynes Convention Center, Boston

1990 Kallmann McKinnell & Wood:
Shad Hall, Harvard Business School
Allston

1991 Frank O. Gehry & Associates with
Schwartz/Silver Architects:
360 Newbury Street, Boston

1992 SOM, Parsons Brinckerkoff Quade
& Douglas, The Halvorson
Company, Ellenzweig Associates,
and LeMessurier Consultants:
The Park and Garage at
Post Office Square, Boston

1993 Schwartz/Silver Architects:
Rotch Library, MIT, Cambridge

1994 Kallmann McKinnell & Wood:
Hauser Hall, Harvard Law School
Cambridge

1995 No award

1996 Leers Weinzapfel Associates in
association with Chisholm
Washington Architects:
George Robert White Youth
Development Center, Boston

1997 Stanley Saitowitz:
New England Holocaust Memorial
Boston

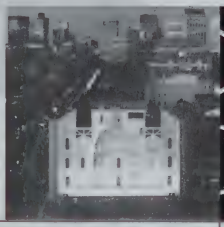
1998 No award

1999 Shared Award

Graham Gund Architects:
The Lincoln School, Brookline

TAMS / Gannet Fleming / URS /
Wallace Floyd Design Group / Stull
and Lee: Vent Building #7 at
Logan Airport

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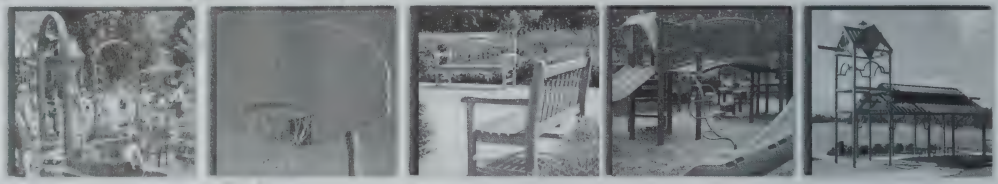
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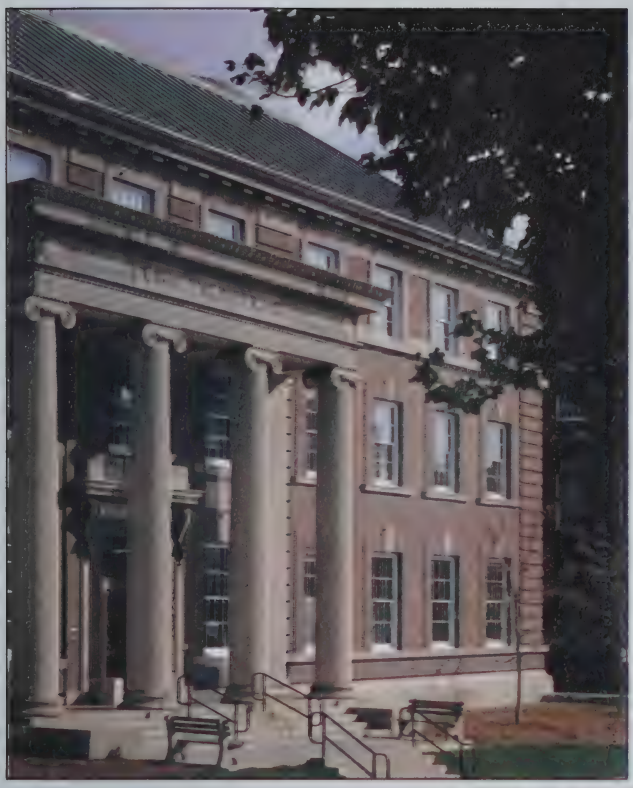
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LOST

The Scherzer Rolling Lift Bascule Bridge — a cultural and architectural icon that crossed Fort Point Channel — languished as the South Bay declined and was taken down piece by piece.



Photo: Boston Public Library Print Department



LOST

Boston's vibrant "rialto" lit the night with enter tainments from vaudeville to theater to movies. The Hotel Avery was recently demolished and is the site of the new Millennium project, now under construction.



Photo: Nishan Bichajian, MIT Rotch Visual Collections



Boston, Lost and Living

by Jane Holtz Kay

It was the mid-'70s and Boston was going, going, bygone.

It was the mid-'70s and Boston was stitching, saving, recycling.

City in a Valley? City upon a Hill? Either way, it was an ambiguous epoch of citymaking tucked between the wounded '60s and the unbridled "Massachusetts Miracle" of the '80s.

If it was not a period when preservationists were miracle-workers, times were changing. Citizens signed on to fend off bulldozers, threats of loss were reduced by preservation ordinances, and bookshelves filled with volumes like *Lost America.* As the decade neared its close, the venerable Boston publishing firm Houghton Mifflin made the inquiry: "Was there enough lost to publish a volume on lost Boston?"

"Enough?!" I responded from my post as architecture critic of the *Nation.* "Why, we've lost more than *anyplace.*"

The book that came forth three years later told the history of a heroic city that would not take no for an answer — would not let mere hills and marshes stand in the way of the need to fill and build, would not let its narrow peninsula stop its will to expand. Neither the Great Fire of 1872 nor the Molasses Flood in 1919 would stanch its restless urge — its constructive and destructive urge — to grow.

Now, 20 years later, the book is newly updated and reissued. But how has its subject fared in those two decades? Much the same and much altered is the fast answer.

To its credit, Boston is a work in process, as any true city must be. In the last two decades of the dwindling century, buildings rose and buildings fell, building reversed decades of decay and buildings lingered in the ashen shadow of neglect and destruction.

In terms of saving high-style architecture, Boston is better. Its landmarks legislation is stronger, its historic districts are better defined, its design controls are now enforced down to the front-yard fences ar roofline decks of the refurbished Back Ba Beacon Hill, and South End. Yet new kinds of losses emerge and, in a period of prosperity, the mournful aspects of lookir backwards surface in new ways.



Photo: Boston Public Library Print Department



Photo: Boston Public Library Print Department

ENDANGERED

A popular pedestrian and preservation favorite, the Northern Avenue Bridge is the last in a beleaguered legacy of Boston's engineering heritage — and, today, a symbolic bridge over Boston's political and planning waters.

VED

, above) The Charlestown y Yard buoys the historic erfront, offering access to sea for both residents and tors as it recalls its 200-year itime history.

VED

) The Baker Chocolate plant, ous for the fresh scent of colate wafting through chester Lower Mills, enjoys w life as housing, office, retail space.

ENDANGERED

(above) The Chestnut Hill Waterworks has fallen on hard times under the indifferent eye of the state's water-resources agency. As muscular on the exterior as in its working innards, it was the most up-to-date pumping station of its day, providing Boston's drinking water.



Photo: Artemis Cultural Institute Fisher Album Boston Public Library

ENDANGERED

Fenway Park is an emblem of the days when "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" meant take me out to the bleachers, not take me up to the expense-account skybox.

e essence of any living city is also its emeral landscape. The neon signs, the et clocks, the flashy marquees of ston's theatrical "rialto" are short-lived definition. Twenty years ago, few would e deplored the erasure of "the seedy side he street." But in a time when gentrifi-on is omnipresent, we miss the nitty-ty, even the scary stuff of the urban lerworld. Where are the start-up spaces the seamy places, the homes on the gin that allow urban living to artists, comers, and all those who can't quite the market's mustard?

he same time, *Lost Boston*'s latest rnation records successes: the restora-n of Olmsted's Emerald Necklace; the ervation of a melting pot of places like Vilna Shul and the African meeting-se; the salvaging of the Charlestown y Yard, built for the most imperious mandant and the humblest navvy. We value the background buildings that ify to the ongoing life of the city.

Yet threats loom large, counterweighing such successes. Places with powerful communal memories (Fenway Park) and splendid infrastructure (the Northern Avenue Bridge, the Chestnut Hill Waterworks) are in danger. But something even larger is threatened, something broader and more imperative, if abstract: Boston's scale, its skyline, its civility are menaced by the projects planned and the garages and parking lots proposed from far-flung neighborhoods to downtown.

As the city finishes the Big Dig, the last century's heroic project to bury the Central Artery, the future is uneasy. "Poverty preserves," goes the axiom. Affluence can be our undoing. The walking city remains a commodity for sale. A lack of planning imperils not only its forthcoming 27 acres over the Artery but Boston's urban environs as a whole.

The *Lost Boston* of 20 years ago was a narrative about the city's heroic legacy of building and a photographic elegy of lost structures and spaces. But two decades later, one would hope that the city could begin to envision projects that could fill tomorrow's scrapbooks with more heroic triumphs and fewer melancholy musings. ■■■

Jane Holtz Kay is the author of *Lost Boston*, which she has recently updated. The architecture critic of the *Nation* and a contributor to the *Boston Globe*, she is also the author of *Asphalt Nation: How the Automobile Took Over America and How We Can Take It Back.*

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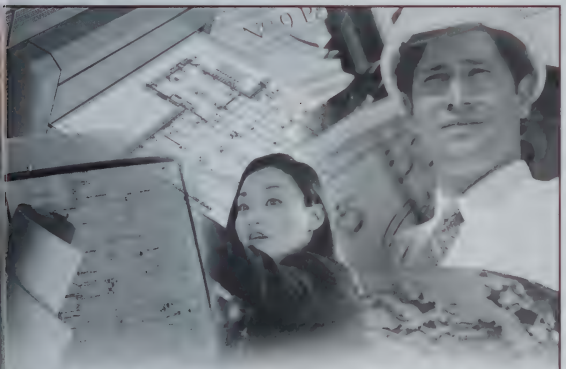
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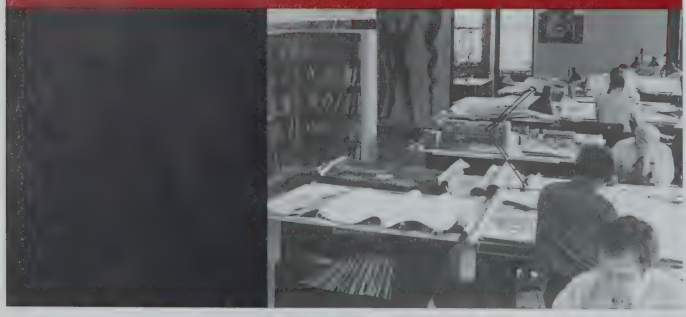
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Looking Back, Looking Forward

Hugh Shepley FAIA talks with George Takoudes AIA





The studio of Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott, circa 1972.

Hugh Shepley FAIA retired from Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott in 1990. Known for his work on projects for major institutions and corporations, he is also recognized for his extraordinary service to the community and the profession. He is a past president of the BSA and of the Boston Architectural Center and continues to serve as chairman of the BSA's Rotch Traveling Scholarship Committee.

George Takoudes AIA became a registered architect in 1999 and is now an associate at Payette Associates in Boston. Longtime readers of *ArchitectureBoston* may remember his article in our first issue (Summer 1998) on the dilemma of the intern architect.

Takoudes Your colleagues describe you as a consummate professional — let's talk about what i means to be a professional. Abraham Flexner once said that a profession, as opposed to a job or a business, is an intellectual enterprise. It applies its knowledge to human and social problems. It must pass on what it knows to the next generations. An it must be imbued with an altruistic spirit. I sense that, for you, passing knowledge on to the next generations is terribly important — your whole career demonstrates a commitment to education a a commitment to service. Where did that altruistic spirit come from?

Shepley I don't know; I think I was born with i My father was an architect, and he always said to h four sons and one daughter, "Don't go into architecture unless you have to." Because he just about lost everything in the Depression. Hardly anybody today remembers what it was like. It was disaster. And for 25 years, nothing got done in Boston. I went into the construction business, and that was fun, because I like to build things and I have a knack for fixing things. But I took an aptitude test which said I ought to be an architect — just what my father said I shouldn't be. I began going to classes at the BAC [Boston Architectural Center] at night. After three years my father said I should work for him. When I reminded him that h had told me not to go into architecture unless I ha to, he said, "It's now clear that you do have to!" I suppose I was kind of altruistic from the beginning because my friends who went into real estate and investments made buckets of money, and I never made any money. But I've had a very interesting li

Takoudes Some people say that our profession ha regressed in some way, that we've somehow lost ou stature and our place in society. Where do you see us now?

Shepley People don't understand what architects do, and therefore they underrate us. They think we're the guys who come in at the end and make everything look nice. And so they don't call us in early enough to pick sites, to do the programming. They hire people called project managers, who say "Don't worry, I'll get your architect for you" — an then they take over the whole process. I think we'v lost out to those people, and it concerns me. We should let people know all the talents and abilities we have. We can put a whole job together. We can pick the site with a client. We can program it. We can design it. We can make the construction documents. We can help them choose the builder.

e can oversee the construction. We can stay on top of the oject and the schedule. We can do the whole thing. I have an chitect friend down on Cape Cod who does that. He was signing houses and he said, "I don't need a contractor." Now hires the carpenters. He hires the plumbers. He gets the ole job done for his clients, and they think he's wonderful. e have lost out, frankly, and I think it's our fault. Architects so self-effacing.

koudes If there are improvements that need to be made, and ve need to work harder at establishing our place in society, ere can that happen?

epley I think education is partly responsible. Because, nkly, a lot of teachers in architectural school are not really acticing in a full-fledged way, doing the kind of work that ur firm and my firm do. So they don't imbue the students h the feeling that they are master-builders, that they're not t designers. A lot of students graduate with the conviction t they are the world's greatest designers. This is seldom truth. And they have to adjust to the real world, which uite different from the world of education. That's bably as it should be — the two worlds probably should different — but somebody ought to warn them that t is going to be the case. I'm afraid they are too idealistic ning out of school.

koudes Do you think your generation was better prepared? s the training different?

pley I'll put in a plug for my BAC training, because by time I got my degree I had already had a lot of experience to having worked full time while I was studying. I learned v contractors think — what's important to them as well what isn't. Therefore, I moved into the position of project hitect easily, because I could work with contractors. I derstood their mentality. I urge young architects to do this.

t perhaps people in general were more realistic back then, ause we had come out of the Depression, followed by World r II. So there had been a long period of drought for hitects. People were just happy to get a job. Most firms were de up of a few principals, and everybody else was staff. There e no such things as associates — there weren't a lot of titles und. I considered myself a draftsman, because that's what I , and that's the way I was treated. I had to earn my own way. lay, young people have very high expectations. We all are king for the fast track today. There wasn't any fast track back n. We were more patient, perhaps.

oudes Did people take more time to do things right? at was the difference in pace?

Shepley It was quite different in a lot of ways. There were really very few firms in Boston in the mid- to late-1940s that could do a sizeable job. There might have been four or five. Now there are a hundred that can do a sizeable job. So there wasn't much competition, and it wasn't as fierce as it is today. There wasn't the feeling of urgency that we have today. Everybody wants everything rapidly, and we fast-track jobs, and we do things today that were unheard-of back then. For instance, we did a lot of work for Northeastern University on a handshake. No written document. When I became a principal in the firm, my father-in-law, who was a partner in a law firm, asked if I had a written agreement. I said, "Yes, it's five pages long, because it's an old firm." And then I asked what sort of agreement he had when he became a partner. He said, "A handshake — if you don't trust them, you shouldn't do business with them." And I agree with him.

Takoudes I've never practiced architecture when there was not a litigious environment. I've never practiced architecture without a computer. I've never practiced architecture without e-mail. And I've never practiced without a fax. But it's clear when you walk around the city of Boston — or any city for that matter — that we live in a world that was not created with faxes or e-mails or Web pages.

Shepley No. And it was slow. I remember the first copying machine we bought — I could actually put a piece of paper into a machine and get a copy! It came out in about four minutes. One copy. It was really wet. I had to hang it up on a clothesline next to the machine until it dried out. It was buff colored, and it would deteriorate in the file in about a year and a half. But we thought it was a miracle. Compare that to xerography today. And we had very simple equipment — a drawing board, a T-square — if you remember what that is — a couple of triangles, and a few pencils. We had a few telephones in the drafting room — perhaps one telephone to every eight people. We didn't do a lot of telephoning. Today, we walk down the street and we're talking on phones. Is that healthy or not? You tell me. But everything is much faster today, and expectations are much higher. And that has changed the profession quite a bit.

Takoudes I wonder if we're really more productive with the new technology.

Shepley I can't answer. Is it better? It's faster. The speed of communication, transportation, calculation, is unbelievable. If my father could come back, he would be astounded to see it.

Takoudes One would imagine that the advancements in technology would allow for faster, more accurate decision-making and a more productive office. And my sense is that, in fact, that may not be the case.

Shepley You are bringing up a topic that I have been talking about for 20 years. I tell my sons, "In your lifetime there will be disenchantment with technology." I already see it coming. I read articles about it. Is all this really better? Are we living better lives? Are we happier, more fulfilled? I don't believe so.

Takoudes When I took my licensing exam, for example, it was all on the computer — this is new within the last two or three years. You take it on your own schedule, each section whenever you want, so you make reservations. It's like making airline reservations. There's a part of me that feels very nostalgic for the way it used to be — the sort of rite of passage that one used to go through.

Shepley We took a four-day exam — four consecutive days. The design exam alone was 12 hours, and the other days were 8 hours each of solid examinations. It was tough.

Takoudes Did you have role models when you were starting out?

Shepley Of course, Frank Lloyd Wright was a hero. He actually came to the Boston Architectural Center. He had given a talk at Jordan Hall, and it was so crowded that a lot of young architects never got there. So the dean of the BAC, Arcangelo Cascieri, invited him to talk to some of us the next day. Wright was amazing. He walked in, took off his cape and his porkpie hat, handed them to his son, and said, "You ask me questions. I talked last night; you talk now." Some of us were loaded for bear, ready to ask him about what we considered to be inconsistencies and shifts in his philosophy. We started firing questions, and the answers came back beautifully. Wonderful English. Just as though he were writing it. Not faltering for a moment. We were absolutely spellbound by this man. Frank Lloyd Wright never went to architectural school, as you know. Nor did Mies van der Rohe or Le Corbusier. Those were my heroes.

Photo: Paul J. Weber

Photo: © Ezra Stoller



Takoudes Frank Lloyd Wright is a good example of someone who was able to redefine himself over the course of his career an therefore sustain a long career. Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott just celebrated its 125th anniversary. And that brings up the subject of longevity. What are the secrets? How was your firm able to persevere for 125 years?

Shepley Partly luck! H.H. Richardson founded the firm, and he was a sole practitioner. He was — as was Frank Lloyd Wrigh — a one-man show. He decided everything. And when he died at 47 years old, he left the firm to his three trusted draftsmen, whose names were Shepley, Rutan, and Coolidge. Shepley later married Richardson's daughter, which is why I'm Richardson's great-grandson. They formed one of the early professional partnerships in architecture. There weren't very many in the United States at that time; McKim, Mead, and White was one the others. But they thrived. Of course, Richardson had done work as far away as California, Chicago, Pittsburgh, and St. Louis, so he had established quite a national practice for himsel But they ran with it, and they developed an amazing practice.

They were very different people. Charles Rutan was a structural engineer, so he did his thing. George Shepley, my grandfather, was a designer, so he did his thing. Charles Coolidge was a grea promoter and a wonderful organizer; the clients loved him, because he had a great personality. He was a good designer, too but he brought in the work and made everybody feel good. Th three of them just went like gangbusters. Later, as his partners died, Coolidge took on a partner named Shattuck and then eventually my father came in the firm. It became Coolidge Shepley Bulfinch and Abbott, Bulfinch being a great-grandson Charles Bulfinch. They all had their own roles. My father was completely in charge of design. Bulfinch was a structural engineer and had complete control of all the construction and the engineering. Abbott was a great designer, but he was very s So he just sat there and drew beautiful things all day.

Coolidge died not long after that, and the firm continued. But it's always been able, by luck, to find a combination of people who trusted each other and worked well together. And we've al always encouraged new talent. We set up a mandatory retireme age of 65 for all principals — no exceptions; I was one of the first three to reach it. But it's been very successful. The firm is now run by people between 45 and 60 years old, and they're wonderful. They have energy and enthusiasm, and they're doin things we could never do. I think it's just great. I guess that's t secret, if there is any secret of success.

A half-century of work by Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott:

1932
Lowell House, Harvard University, Cambridge

1953
Burr Hall, Harvard University, Cambridge

1975
Museum of Our National Heritage, Lexington, MA

1988
GE Management Development Institute Crotonville, NY

koudes An ability to pass on the mission?

epley Yes, but also an ability to encourage young people d not keep them under your thumb all the time. Richardson ppened to be ill for a good many years at the end of his life. e had what was then called Bright's disease. And so he was in d a lot of the time, sketching and creating concepts. Shepley d Coolidge went out, met the clients, and took care of the tails. So by the time he died, they knew how to do it. It was st luck, if you want to call it that, that Richardson happened be sick. Otherwise he might have never given them the ance to develop. And that's what you have to do, I think — velop your staff, treat them right, and hope they'll stay th you.

koudes I think you're right. I know it's something that I preciate. I feel that my firm wants to give me enough sponsibility to let me develop. It's a delicate balance, I imagine, let out enough rope without losing control. And it must especially hard in a field that is changing so quickly. The ofession has really exploded.

epley Yes, it has. These are remarkably good times now. u don't, at your age, know bad times. You can't even imagine m. I hope they don't ever come again. We haven't seen such extended period of growth and optimism in this country ce the late 1890s.

koudes You're right. The last recession occurred while I was ll in school in the early '90s.

epley The previous recession that was really important s in 1972, 1973. At that point, everybody stopped building. ople called us up and said, "Stop the job!" We had to let half r staff go in a relatively short time. And then we had to go out d find work — we had never had to find work before and dn't know how to do it. One of my partners tried it first, and didn't have any success, so he said to me, "You try it." I took o courses in what was called "marketing" — a new word. And aid to my partners, "We've got to get work," and they said, et work? We're professionals. People come to us." And I said, hey're not coming. We have to get them. Other people are ting them." But I began to get help from my partners, and it wly evolved. Today, of course, we have a whole marketing partment and a whole public relations department. It's wild — so different. We used to have a little brochure that was ewritten, with bad graphics — just in case somebody really nted to see what we'd done. Most people just walked in the or and said, "Hey, I need a building. When can you start?" t when that recession hit, a number of Boston firms went ht out of business. One of them, Campbell Aldrich Nulty, d 125 people. They went broke and were out of business just a few months.

Takoudes One of the things I appreciate about Boston, one of the reasons I moved here to practice architecture, is the very friendly environment in the architecture community. Much more so than in some other cities. And I like to think some of that has to do with ethics, with people having an appreciation for the profession and treating each other fairly. There's a sense that we're all in this together. Is that something that has always been part of the BSA and part of Boston?

Shepley I think architects have always treated each other pretty well, with few exceptions. The BSA is a wonderful organization — it's probably the best AIA chapter in the United States. When I started on the board, over 30 years ago, we met in a little rented room near the Prudential Center. We had one part-time secretary, and about a tenth as many members we do today. And now we own our building and there are 3,000 members, and they're active and involved in the community and the profession. It's wonderful. We do help each other out — on committee work, on design, on technical subjects — and I think that helps the whole profession.

Takoudes I started this conversation thinking that the things that youth brings to the profession are idealism and energy, and that over time that probably erodes. But with your own energy and sense of optimism, you've disproved my whole theory.

Shepley I think we *should* be optimistic. I don't think any civilization can get along without architects. It's just a question of how they are regarded.

Takoudes You've proven your passion for the profession. But if you were not an architect, what would you want to be?

Shepley I might want to be a developer, because I like to see things get built. I'm a hands-on kind of person, and I'm not impatient.

Takoudes I would have thought you'd say you'd join a big-band orchestra. I saw that trumpet case you were carrying.

Shepley Well, that's another thing I could do! But I'd have to practice a lot.

Takoudes It seems to me that one of the subtexts of this conversation has been whether change is always better. And I don't know that we've answered it.

Shepley We've got to stop to think whether change is always better. Sometimes it's just fashionable. We're going through an amazing period of technological development and of economic well-being. It's going to be a very interesting ride, and I hope I stay around long enough to see how it works out. And I wish all the young architects in the world all good fortune and hope they enjoy as good a life as I have had in the profession. ■■■



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Two Views
The Old

by William Morgan



William Morgan teaches the history of architecture and historic preservation at Roger Williams University.

New Old South Church: The very name says much about the ambivalence of Bostonian feeling about the old and the new. Boston's schizophrenia about the past is not a recent phenomenon — think of the noble effort that eradicated an Italian grocery in the North End to recreate a Paul Revere house that never was. And now, the idea of being "historic" leads to such silliness as skyscrapers with Palladian motifs scaling their walls, not to mention overscaled and fatuous monstrosities like the Wren-on-the-Neva of Rowes Wharf.

Alas, homage to the past can debase the future. What can be more deadly (and more un-historic?) than museum villages or overly sanitized restorations? Did Alexander Parris and Josiah Quincy really intend their magnificent market to be a souk for the peddling of T-shirts and ice cream? Beware of architects talking contextualism — the result is too often a Wrentham Outlet Village, a Mashpee Commons, or a South Hadley Village Commons. Contemporary architects rarely understand the language of classical architecture, and so the capricious employment of columns and pediments is invariably unfortunate.

History and the past are not necessarily the same thing. For starters, memory is selective, and the uses of history are usually more political than enlightening. Anything sold as olde, and almost anything Retro, is disappointing. Those brand-new diners (complete with doublewide aisles and James Dean mannequins) are only an echo of what the Providence and Worcester diner manufacturers accomplished. And imagine the arrogance of erecting an unbuilt design by Wright (the Madison, Wisconsin, convention center) or moving a house from Danvers to Washington ("The Lindens"). Instead, a desirable goal would be respect for the past — ancestor worship in the Japanese sense.

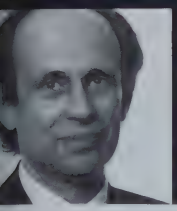
There is a debate going on in Providence, for example, over the style of a skyscraper-hotel to be built on top of a Beaux-Arts building close to the Rhode Island capitol. The capitol, Charles McKim's brilliant tribute to Christopher Wren and Michelangelo, is considered sacred (the sort of composition our Modernist teachers taught us, wrongly it turns out, to revile). A tall building nearby, some argue, ought not to be in a "Modern" style. Sadly, the proposed tower is an over-scaled, dreary, bottom-line piece of non-architecture. The debate ought to be about design quality, appropriate scale, and contribution to the cityscape, not style. Dressing today's chippy in Grandmother's Worth gown is not the same as resurrecting the old gal.

Will we ever admire, ever want to save some of today's strip malls, spec office blocks, and builder houses? If any are built well enough to survive a generation or two, then let our descendants decide. Who could have predicted that Walter Gropius' 1938 house in Lincoln, Massachusetts, would have become an icon, a house museum maintained by the very organization founded by Brahmins concerned about inculcating immigrants with American values? A good house then is a good house now.

What we need to do is design and construct the best possible buildings now — just as Richardson, Mies, Bulfinch, and Aalto did in their time. Let's forget about historicism, contextualism, and stylistic terminology. Why not design buildings that work, that speak of our humanity, and that may enrich civilization? Let's revere the past and learn from it. But let's not pimp it. ■■■

Two Views The New

by Alex Krieger FAIA



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nd is a principal of
han Krieger & Associates
Cambridge, MA.

It is not surprising that at the turn of the millennium the word "new" has attained unprecedented prominence. Indeed, a current best-selling book uses the word twice in its title. *The New, New Thing* by Michael Lewis is the story of Jim Clark, an entrepreneur who has built three separate billion-dollar companies (Silicon Graphics, Netscape, and Healtheon) and, the book suggests, is creating a fourth and conceiving of a fifth. Clark's ability to anticipate the next entrepreneurial potential in technology makes for fascinating reading, reminding us that among those tracking breakthroughs in business there is little cachet in the old, old thing.

In other contexts, however, there are more nuances behind the popular use of the word "new." Consider the meaning of "new" as a prefix to urbanism, as in the currently popular "New Urbanism." Those unfamiliar with the phrase may surmise a call for a new kind of urbanism, a desire for something bold and unprecedented (perhaps for the Jim Clarks of the world). Such a desire was expressed by the architects and planners of the Modern Movement at the beginning of the 20th century. But that is not the intent of the current advocates of the phrase.

For the New Urbanists, the "new" refers to a current appreciation for traditional urbanism — a return to urbanism by a disillusioned suburban culture. Curiously, this interpretation is not readily deduced from the residential estates which account for much of the New Urbanists' work, but it is observable in various old urban neighborhoods experiencing increasing reinvestment and preservation efforts.

Those skeptical of the New Urbanists see the use of "new" in marketing terms, as in "new and improved." Things advertised as "new and improved" have often seduced Americans, generally producing redundancy. The majority of sprawl — decried by all good New Urbanists — has been created by those very people who seek to avoid it by building "new and improved" communities. American history cautions us to beware of the label of "new and improved" adopted by entrepreneurs who understand that what attracts consumers is the slightly different rather than the truly new.

To still others, the "new" in New Urbanism might refer to a repositioning of urbanism, an acceptance (supported by tremendous evidence) that Americans still prefer low-density, single-family-home environments. Growing tired of lawned homogeneity and taxing commutes, they demand a dressing-up of their subdivisions with emblems of urban living — a more urbane suburbanism, as some call it.

Finally, the "new" can refer to unique conditions of contemporary urbanism — shopping malls, office parks, "edge cities," themed retail and entertainment complexes, and other such historically unfamiliar environments, which designers must address creatively, rather than dismiss as aberrations. As such, the "new" anticipates different attitudes about designing and planning for modern cities.

One might surmise that such diversity of meaning was intended by whomever invented the term "New Urbanism"; its many connotations surely contribute to its success as a slogan. It combines the allure of the new with an opposite tendency — the urge to seek comfort in the known. Unlike the bottom-line culture of venture capitalism, city-making engenders a more equivocal demand for the new. Exciting though change may be, it is also unsettling. Indeed, a culture assaulted by the new and the next seeks antidotes to change in other spheres of life. Traditionally, our dwellings and neighborhoods have offered respite from the drumbeat of change. Thus, it is understandable that an era of ever-hastening innovation in business, technology, and commerce engenders a romanticized recall of the ways and the places in which we used to live. This is our predicament at this momentous change in the calendar: heightened expectations about what lies ahead, coupled with sentimentality and unease about what may be irretrievably lost along the march to the new. ■■■

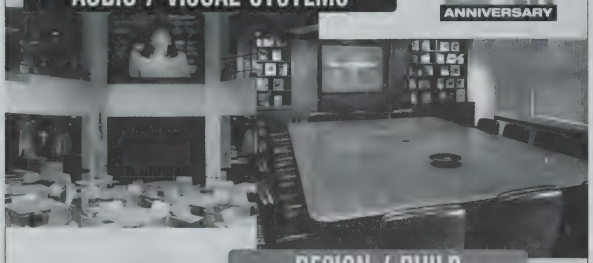
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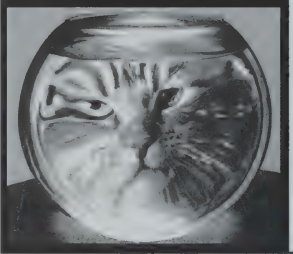
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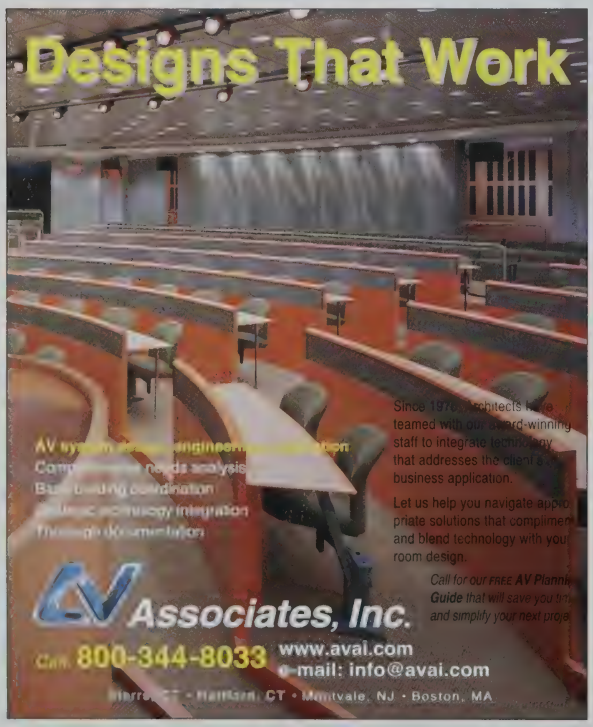
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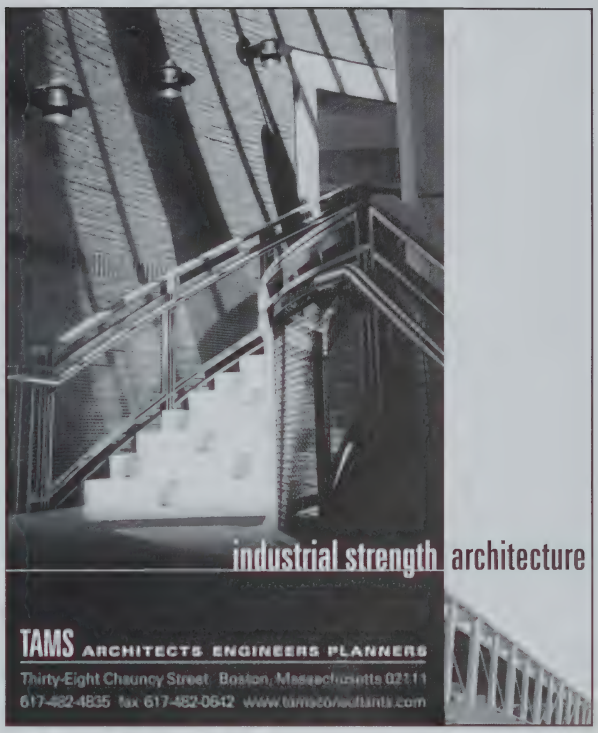


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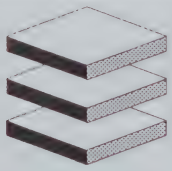
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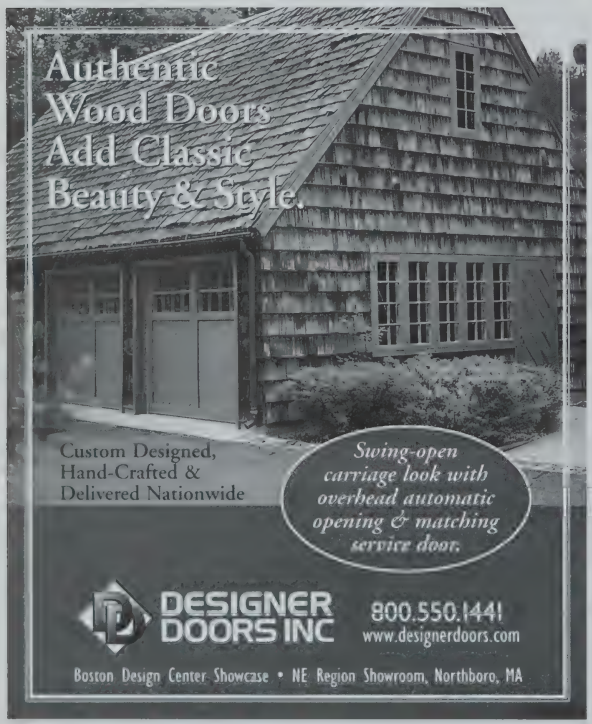
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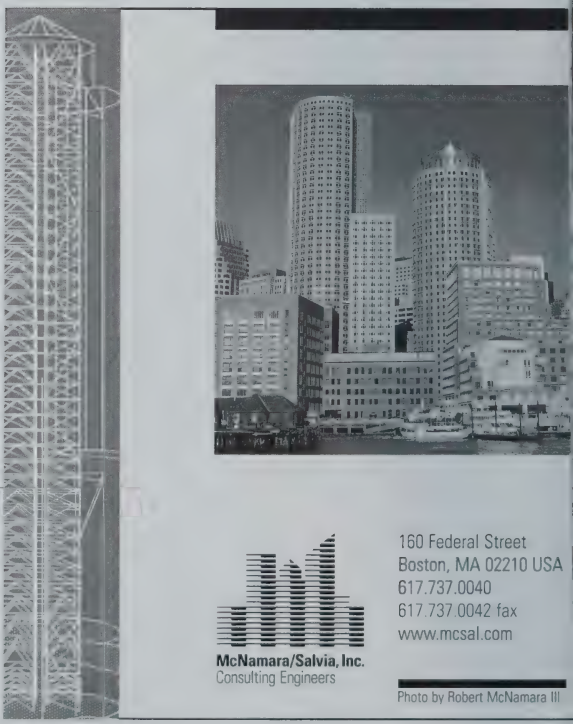
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Photo by Robert McNamara III

Covering the Issues

Periodical roundup

by Gretchen Schneider



Happy Birthday... *Landscape Architecture* is "the oldest, largest, and most continuous repository of landscape architectural practice, research, philosophy, and teaching anywhere." Its November 1999 issue pays a comprehensive but staid tribute to the 100th birthday of the American Society of Landscape Architects. Selections from old "Letters" and "Riprap" columns are most lively; these illustrate the changing nature of what we've said and how we've said it, while offering unique glimpses of personalities behind The Big Names — Olmsted, B. Jackson, William Whyte, Garret Eckbo. The original text's refreshingly unglossy awkwardness reveals sometimes outdated, quirky, naïve, or misguided assumptions – and is all the more fascinating for it.

Changing of the god... "The God of Right Angles is dead, and architecture has come alive," proclaims Aaron Betsky in *Wired* (September 1999). This is a quick, espresso-shot mention of five current projects dependent on cutting-edge technology. The text is predictable, but the projects pictured go beyond the expected computer-generated image and fantastic free-forms to illustrate how computers allow untested materials, unprecedented performance, and precise solar subtleties in even understated, modest-looking buildings.

Frankenbridge, The Sequel... Remember this movie? November 7, 1940. A graceful suspension bridge sways in the breeze...the wind picks up...the bridge swings... the bridge thrashes...before our eyes the bridge collapses. It tosses itself and an ill-fated car to unseen depths below. Think Resonance. Think Structures 101. Think Tacoma Narrows. This thin, plate-girder suspension bridge was an elegant example of an era when style and Depression economy dictated minimal materials, and thus sealed its premature fate. And like any good movie, that's not quite the end.

Tacoma Narrows had a twin. The Deer Isle Bridge, on Penobscot Bay in Maine, is one year older and bears one key difference: it still stands. In "A Bridge That Didn't Collapse," in *Invention and Technology* (Fall 1999), Barbara Moran thoroughly explains why, without insulting our intelligence but in language even the structurally-challenged can understand. Moran credits Deer Isle's longevity to "Yankee attributes of ingenuity and stubbornness" and a half-century of tinkering. The emerging personality of this bridge is quite remarkable, as a living thing and working laboratory from which we still learn.

Museum madness... "Imagine how a peasant, a prince, or a pope would have felt coming out of the French countryside in the fifteenth century and all of a sudden there was Chartres Cathedral?" That's what Guggenheim director Tom Krens wanted from Frank Gehry in Bilbao and, by all accounts, that's what he got. But...does it have staying power? In "Lost Art," in December's redesigned *Metropolis*, Jeffrey Hogrefe asks what happens when the building gets familiar and museums must instead rely on tourists coming to see (gasp!) the art. It's an important question for many cities, given the recent burst of star-studded activity: Hogrefe mentions Meier in L.A., Hadid in Cincinnati, Calatrava in Milwaukee, Holl in Kansas City, Moneo in Houston, and Ando in Fort Worth. With four Boston-area museums facing major design projects (Fogg, Museum of Fine Arts, Institute of Contemporary Art, Peabody Essex), we'd better listen, too. Yet Hogrefe might go too far. In the end, he likens Holl and Moneo's understated elegance to the post-Chartres Protestant Reformation, implying these two less-flashy projects finally put the focus back on the art. We may cheer this conclusion, but we should also challenge it. It's important to think of buildings in terms of longer-than-roof-warranty lifespans, buildings that outlive the institution, that pilgrims flock to, even if the art's bad. Just think: Regardless of our religion, we still visit Chartres.



Gretchen Schneider teaches architecture at the University of Kentucky and returns frequently to Boston.

Tell it like it is... Sprawl. For nearly a century now we've criticized it. We've built it. Then we've criticized some more. In *Rolling Stone* (September 30, 1999: "I Hate the Suburbs, Sort of..."), P.J. O'Rourke adds a desperately needed tirade of reality and humor to this ongoing necessary-but-way-too-predictable sprawl debate. I laughed out loud. Irreverent yet truthful, sharp-witted yet thoughtful, O'Rourke tackles head-on this can't-live-with-them/can't-live-without-them affair we have with our cars and leads us on a spirited romp through suburban D.C. and our collective American upbringing. ■■■

ARCHITECTURE CITY PLANNING INTERIOR DESIGN DESIGN BEAUTY DELIGHT UTILITY ECONOMY FUNCTION NEW CONSTRUCTION RENOVATION REHABILITATION STITUTIONS COMMERCIAL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ICES CONDOMINIUMS RESTAURANTS BANKS HIGH LOW RISE ROWHOUSE LIBRARIES INDUSTRY SCHOOLS ELEMENTARY SECONDARY COLLEGES LABORATORIES OFFICE ALTERNATIVES OPTIONS FEASIBILITY STUDIOS SKETCHES MINARY DESIGN DESIGN DEVELOPMENT WORKING DRAWING DING CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION EGYPTIAN GREEK ROMAN BYZANTINE GOTHIC SSANCE CLASSICAL REVIVAL GOTHIC REVIVAL MODERN PERIOD ING MATERIALS STONE BRICK WOOD CONCRETE STEEL STUCCO ING OBJECTIVES ENERGY EFFICIENCY LOW MAINTENANCE COSTS DABLE CONSTRUCTION COSTS ADAPTABLE DURABLE DING SYSTEMS STRUCTURE BEAMS SLABS LINTELS FLOOR WALLS ROOFS INSULATION WINDOWS DOORS TS WATER PROOFING VENTILATION AIR CONDITIONING TRIC PLUMBING SPRINKLERS PUMPS ACEWAYS SECURITY SOUND ING EQUIPMENT ELEVATORS ESCALATORS DUMBWAITERS CHUTES RATION RECEPTACLES FIREPLACES CONVEYORS TURE PLANNING INTERIOR DESIGN OR BUILDINGS INTERIOR FINISHES LAMINATES METALS WOOD VENEER VARNISH LIGHTING TILE CARPET MARBLE TERRAZZO ACOUSTICAL TILES FLOORS SLATE HARDWARE BRONZE CABINETS FURNITURE DRAPERIES GRAPHICS COLORS TRIM ENVIRONMENTS CLIMATOLOGY TOPOGRAPHY CONTEXT COMPATIBLE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURAL PROJECT TEAMS ARCHITECTS AND PLANNERS ENGINEERS ELECTRIC HEATING AND VENTILATING AIR CONDITIONING ACOUSTICAL PLUMBING LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT HYGENISTS FIRE SUPPRESSION SECURITY SYSTEMS AND MORE BUILDING PROJECTS OBJECTIVES CLIENT ASPIRATIONS NEEDS USE SPACE PROGRAM FUNCTION IMAGE OCCUPANCY RELATIONSHIPS FLOW ACCESSIBILITY QUALITIES BUDGETS CODES ORDINANCES AND REGULATIONS DOCUMENTATION PLANS SECTIONS ELEVATIONS DETAILS SCHEDULES ESTIMATES OF COSTS

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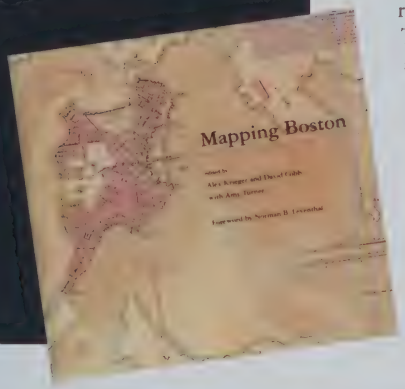
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ooks

Mapping Boston

dited by Alex Krieger
nd David Cobb
ith Amy Turner
IT Press, 1999

eviewed by
avid Dixon FAIA



apping Boston is magnificent.

his beautiful book tells Boston's story through the eyes of
e mapmakers who chronicled its evolution. Part of an
traordinary collection assembled by Norman Leventhal, one
Boston's most respected real-estate developers, the maps
emselves are visually captivating: A 1781 image of the
awmut Peninsula reaching out boldly into the sea, surround-
by miles of lonely woods, farms, and hills, is eerie in its
eer beauty. The maps tell fascinating stories: The 1781 map
nveys, as no words can, the immensity of creating a city in
e midst of a New World wilderness; yet another features the
itish term for Beacon Hill, "Mount Whoredom," telling
lumes about the British view of Bostonians. These images
affirm our connections to Boston's history: Who does not
ish discovering that the Freedom Trail follows the streets that
triots ran or that the South End represented a civic effort
keep middle-class Yankees from leaving Boston in the face
surging immigration?

though paging through *Mapping Boston* is immense fun,
oking only at the maps and the accompanying collection of
ints, old photographs, aerial photos, and other images would
a real mistake. The maps weave together three very thought-
groups of essays that provide a richly satisfying under-
nding of Boston's form and character: an economic and social
tory of Boston (with essays by Sam Bass Warner, Jr., Nancy
asholes and Amy Turner); a history of mapmaking as an art,
ence, and business (with essays by Barbara McCorkle,
vid Bosse, and David Cobb); and an annotated topographical
tory of Boston (with essays by Nancy Seasholes and Alex
ieger FAIA).

In a highly personal and impressionistic epilogue, author James Carroll notes that Boston is "the grande dame and the young rebel both — provenance and prospect." The city attracts people for its history and its vitality. Yet as Boston struggles to accommodate new investment — bringing 21st-century ideas and opportunities to its 18th- and 19th-century fabric — the debate is dominated by references to our past rather than ideas for our future. The emerging Seaport District offers an opportunity to shape a district that expresses today's energy; it need no more resemble Back Bay than Back Bay resembled Beacon Hill.

Although Boston has inherited a physical intimacy and bond with its past that are rare in American cities, this intimacy and bond are as much myth as reality. Visitors come to marvel at real, walkable streets that suggest a genuine urban community somehow held over from a Currier and Ives past. These quaint streets, full of condominiums that sell for hundreds of dollars per square foot, mock us if we can not tap Boston's great wealth to make our community more livable for all its residents. Historic streets outline a city that has inherited the same racial, social, and economic tensions all too familiar in most American cities. The Metropolitan District Commission struggles to find the funds to make the most essential repairs to the historic Charles River Esplanade. The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority lacks the funds to continue adapting our 19th-century public transit system to the 21st-century city.

"Boston proves that what makes an American…is a shared future, not a common past," Carroll remarks. And yet this is a city in which "the has-been and the not-yet are wrestling with each other, and always have." Yo-Yo Ma's music garden, originally planned to spill into City Hall Plaza in Boston, recently opened in Toronto instead. This wonderful public space slipped from our city — and we are now in danger of losing the chance to reclaim the rest of City Hall Plaza in a manner truly worthy of our city's creativity and vitality—because as a community we are perilously close to losing our ability to hold constructive civic dialogue about change.

We owe a collective thanks to the makers of *Mapping Boston* for creating a genuinely thoughtful assessment of Boston's rich past. Perhaps its ultimate value is in causing us to stop and consider what sort of stewards we are to the legacy the book so lovingly conveys. We now share the responsibility for mapping Boston's future. ■■■

David Dixon FAIA is an urban designer and principal of Goody, Clancy Associates in Boston.

Editor's note: *Mapping Boston* is available from the BSA (617 951 1433 ext. 221).

Faster

by James Gleick
Pantheon Books, 1999

Reviewed by
Suzanne de Monchaux

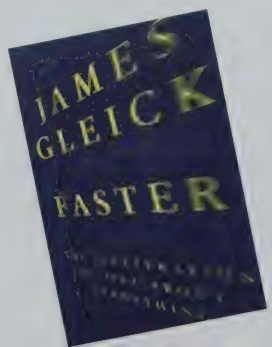
At a pace consistent with its theme, Gleick's compelling and lively book documents what we already sense — that everything is moving faster and that, to a large extent, we are colluders in the process. Toasters toast faster, microwave ovens save cooking time (though less than we think), athletic winners are identified by the clock, and time itself is measured in the femtosecond — less than the time it takes the Concorde to pass an atom. We in turn demand instant responses — from elevators, where we jab repeatedly at call buttons, and from the telephone directory system, where, to save us time, the word "please" has been dropped from the automated instructions. The description "instant" has become a marketing advantage — instant coffee, instant replay, instant gratification — admittedly with some loss of quality: look at the fast-food industry.

Despite sophisticated technologies, however, not everything moves faster. Big systems remain vulnerable to "minor disturbances." Time saved on a fast flight can be lost on the congested car journey back to town — in which case we can then pursue our growing impulse to "multitask." As we crawl along, we can learn from a taped language course, call home, and drink coffee from an automated dispenser.

Gleick does observe that some things cannot be made to go faster, such as compost and soufflés. But there are other more significant things that cannot be accelerated, such as thinking. Gleick admits as much, though he conveys it more as an unfortunate constraint rather than an inherent characteristic. He notes that quick thinking can be suspect as glib and superficial, but that we still associate it with intelligence and it can be an advantage in job interviews. But there is a difference between an apt response to a prospective employer and the creative attention given to solving a problem. Thinking not only takes time — it *needs* time. And while it is true that many of the mechanics of thinking can be technologically accelerated, thinking in its deepest and most reflective sense cannot be rushed.

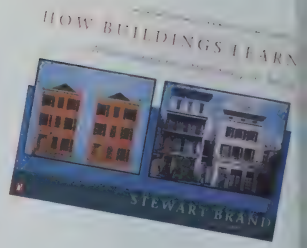
Where does all of this play into architecture? All architects recognize the pressure from clients to produce — but it has ever been thus. Computers have undoubtedly changed the pace of process, but the stuff of architecture remains much the same as in the days when the charrette, the cart on which Beaux-Arts students rushed their work to the Académie, signified the inevitable last minute quality of its product — the outcome of a backwards-and-forwards process of resolving multiple systems, opportunities, and constraints into a hospitable and pleasing physical form. If things continue as Gleick describes, the real challenge to architecture, therefore, may come less from in-house demands to move faster than from the question of how to most appropriately serve those accelerating and changing systems that will become its clients. ■■■

Suzanne de Monchaux is a consultant in behavioral science and social planning. She is a research affiliate in the department of architecture at MIT and lives in Brookline, MA.



How Buildings Learn: What happens after they're built

by Stewart Brand
Penguin Books, 1994



Reviewed by
Geoffrey Gordon Pingree,
Assoc. AIA

Architecture is the paradigm of stability. We speak of timeless monuments and see architecture as frozen music. We like to think that design is complete with the delivery of the architect's drawings, each sheet stamped authoritatively as a work of art. Photographs capture that rarefied moment between construction and occupation, our buildings frozen in place as perfectly as butterflies pinned in a case.

Stewart Brand believes none of it. In his book, *How Buildings Learn*, construction is an ongoing and unending process, and time is the missing fourth dimension of our architectural sensibilities. Always provocative, often brilliant, occasionally confused and contradictory, this book is an attempt to refashion our static notions of building. Written in 1994, it has become a classic, praised by preservationists, architects, and interested amateurs alike.

Trained as a biologist, later the editor of the *Whole Earth Catalogue* and a visiting scientist at MIT's Media Lab, Brand takes a broad and multidisciplinary approach to his subject, pulling together sources as diverse as Christopher Alexander, Buckminster Fuller, the preservation movement, facility management, and business planning. He takes us on a tour of "low road" buildings from abandoned factories to roadside storage facilities, and shows us how we constantly recreate our environment. His description of the construction and real-estate industries is full of insights. He urges us to see building maintenance as a kind of romance, and asks us to imagine a construction process that lasts long enough (perhaps years) so that designers can clearly identify a the owner's needs.

Other parts of the book are le inspired. Brand has difficulty resolving his desire for historic continuity and his appreciatio of new technology, as in his comparison of wood and fiber glass boats (he prefers wood, unless he is on the water). Wh reading, I was reminded of a work by another author fascinated by the effect of time on our buildings, Aldo Rossi's *The Architecture of the City*. Careful, reverential, at times obscure, Rossi saw constructio as the primary repository of ou collective memory and in doin so touched directly on the ineffable effect history has on our environment. It is an insig to which Brand is sympathetic yet one he cannot bring himse to state directly. His romantici and his rationalism are at odds he seems hesitant to offer an aesthetic preference, as if doing so would make his book seem undemocratic.

While Rossi was interested in what remains, Brand cares mo for what changes. Brand's desi is to liberate us from a static, reverential view of our environment. The real design of our buildings is incremental, unpredictable, and requires the passage of time to be truly effective. ■■■

Geoffrey Gordon Pingree, Assoc. AIA works at Ann Beha Associates, in Boston.

Anytime

nytime

ited by Cynthia Davidson
IT Press, 1999

viewed by Patrick Hickox

ytime is the eighth volume in e "*Any...*" series, which began 1991 with *Anyone* and is tended "to investigate the ndition of Architecture at the d of the Millennium." Each lume follows upon a confer- ce of the same name, with tures drawn from an inter- tional collection of disciplines, esenting papers and debating e purported theme.

is impossible to characterize a lume consisting of 39 essays as many authors. The editor, nthia Davidson, argues that ltural differences are aired, ally engendering understand- g. As the title suggests, the ntributors detail their concerns out concepts of time, with casional links to architecture. terspersed are discussions, of a rt frequent in the centers of chitecture/theory, marbled th words such as "cognition," oucault," "capitalism," Darwin," which are cut and sted in varying combinations.

e see some familiar faces. ichael Sorkin indulges his sessions regarding midtown anhattan — this time, with ffic in his sights — and rants ever against Mayor Giuliani. r those uninterested in the nor policies of NYC, he acks that sacred cow, Disney, ich he refers to as "a bordello time," thus not letting us miss other favorite stock of imagery. Charles Jencks includes his requisite oozing graphs, plus another embarrassing foray into design, having moved from cheesecake garage renovation to abstruse landscape work — please, Charles, stick to your typewriter! Rem Koolhaas touches not upon the appointed subject, preferring to present his Netherlands Embassy in Berlin, as though he were selling it to prospective clients or — more likely — to a grad-school audience, the most likely readership of this stuff. Peter Eisenman provides some tasty intellectual hors d'oeuvres before invoking Hiroshima and the Holocaust, his twin dead horses of the Apocalypse. He explicates his monument to the latter in Berlin with prose that, while nearly recreating the actual experience, is regrettably necessary for understanding his design.

These authors cannot be faulted for our exhaustion with anything millennial; the *ennui* of the *fin de siècle* has become *ennui* of the *fin de millénaire*. Nonetheless, why are they all retreading themselves? Perhaps, like the Hollywood stars to whose glamour these archiluminaries aspire, they can not step out of their signature roles. One is reminded of David Lodge's *Small World*, in which celebrity academics fly about the world on their departments' budgets, presenting papers to fatten tenure files, pontificating at conferences that feature the same incestuous lot.

Theory has now become a form of ornament, supplying what some architecture lacks. Le Corbusier's injunction to look at the backs of buildings now morphs to "look at their footnotes." Adolf Loos saw ornament as tantamount to smearing of fecal matter. That has always seemed a bit unfair to ornament. However, this modern guise has a strong, familiar odor. ■■■

Patrick Hickox is a principal of Hickox-Williams Architects in Boston.

A Geography of Time

The Temporal Misadventures of a Social Psychologist, or How Every Culture Keeps Time Just a Little Bit Differently

By Robert Levine
Basic Books, 1997

Reviewed by Hubert Murray AIA



Of 31 cities surveyed in the United States for pace of life or "tempo," Boston is the fastest, New York is third, and Los Angeles the slowest. On a global scale, Switzerland is the fastest-paced country and Mexico the slowest, while the United States rests dead center in 16th place. What is this "tempo"? What does it mean to be fastest or slowest, culturally or individually?

Faster cultures tend to be richer, more industrialized, more urban, climatically colder, and more individualistic. Slower cultures tend to be poor, rural, hot, and collectivist. Within cultures there are "Type A" — time-driven — and "Type B" — more relaxed — individuals. Type A's thrive in fast-tempo cultures, but crash in slow cultures; Type B's flourish in a slower pace, but get lost in the rush of the faster pace. Matching banality with a lightly disguised arrogance, Levine talks of CPT, "colored people's time," of Brazilians' lack of punctuality, and the unpredictability of Indian trains. He offers us the concepts of "M-time" (monochronic or clock-time) which guides us Westerners and forms the basis of industrial production and our understanding of linear causality in which things happen sequentially; and that of "P-time" (polychronic or event-time) typified by Burundi farmers who relate events to diurnal, seasonal or natural cycles (dawn to dusk, wet and dry seasons, where and when the cows are grazing). "P-time" connotes time without beginning or end, a space in which many things happen together, synchronously.

Levine suggests we must be able to move between "M-time" and "P-time" seamlessly if we are to do business and maintain our mental health in this world. He cites Japan as a culture which successfully resolves the contradiction of these two time concepts. In Israel, we are told, timekeeping is taught as a social skill, covering punctuality, the distinction between work and social time, and the concepts of waiting and doing nothing.

Why should designers read this book? What does time have to do with space, beyond Giedion's landmark analysis in *Space, Time and Architecture*? Firstly, space is frequently measured in time, in terms such as "light years" and "five-minute walk." "Tide," the space between high and low water, shares the same root as "time," the period between those marks. Secondly, our buildings are in many ways the mediators between Clock Time and Event Time, the enclosure being as much a modifier of time as it is of climate.

For those really interested in the social and technical history of time and timekeeping, David Landes' *Revolution in Time* is still the definitive historical work. But time spent in contemplation of Dürer's *Adoration of the Magi* or Boccioni's *Those Who Go* will enlighten the student of the "geography of time" at least as much as turning the pages of Levine's somewhat lightweight contribution to the subject. ■■■

Hubert Murray AIA is an architect and planner in Cambridge, MA.



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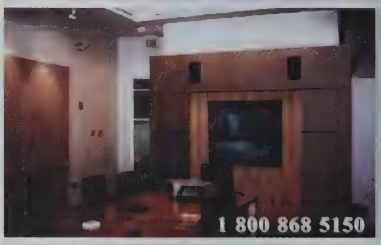
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The Society for Creative Anachronism
www.sca.org
Is the modern world getting you down? Escape to the fun-filled Middle Ages! SCA members are devoted to recreating the world before AD 1600. Wine, wenches, and mead — without that pesky Plague.

Food Timeline
www.gti.net/mocolib1/kid/food.html
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Other Voices by Linda Weltner

Abbot Hall

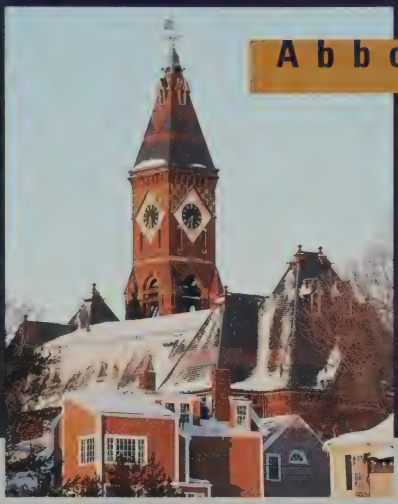


Photo © Dennis Curtin

When you walk into the Arnould Gallery in Marblehead, you cannot help but notice that the clock tower of Abbot Hall appears in almost every painting of the town. Like the star atop a Christmas tree, or a crown upon the head of royalty, the tower dominates the local scene and gives form to the words from the Shaker hymn: "having come down right where we ought to be" — which all true Marbleheaders feel.

Built on the highest point in town, the clock tower is a landmark for sailors at sea. It reigns over old colonial houses and winding streets, an inspiring presence and a source of pride. The massive E. Howard timepiece, whose siblings mark the hours at the Boston Custom House and Yale's Harkness Tower, has been faithfully chiming the half-hour for 133 years.

What greater adventure could I offer my grandson than a chance to help the custodian wind the clock by hand, a once-a-week undertaking? We take an elevator, then climb a wooden ladder suspended along the tower wall. The three of us duck through a trap door to the bell level where the wind whips past us, into a small dark room housing the clock's mechanism. We take turns winding the metal cable which regulates the 1,200-pound striking weight, a task requiring much perseverance. Then Danny and I climb down to the bell deck that circles the inside of the tower and peer from outlooks under the clock's four wooden faces.

The air feels thin as we gaze at the harbor, a shimmering surface of light. Above us, the 2,200-pound bell bears the following inscription:

I ring at twelve the joyful rest of noon:
I ring at nine to slumber sweet of night:
I call to free men with my loudest tones,
Come all ye men and vote the noblest right.

Although the clock was overhauled in 1999, the space looks exactly as it did when the building was dedicated with great fanfare in December of 1877 and named after Benjamin Abbot, a fisherman's son who'd become a wealthy barrel-maker and left the town $103,000 in his will.

At the ceremony, the Honorable Edward Avery proclaimed Abbot Hall a building "which for beauty of architecture, elegance of finish, and thoroughness of construction is matched by none in the county." He noted with pride that corruption had found "no abiding place" within its walls and described the edifice, with its library and 1,200-seat auditorium, as a means to more refined amusements and greater intellectual attainments for townspeople. "Is it not strange in this era of dishonesty and official unfaithfulness," he asked, "to find citizens who have undertaken su a mammoth trust and come out of it wit such credit to themselves and honor to t town?"

As Danny and I peek through the diamond-shaped steel grid, it's easy to imagine that the civic spirit of past generations has taken root in the red bric High as a bird, it is easy to feel that the zippered bands of black brick which, like a gentleman's collar and tie, give the building a sense of great dignity, also declare our hometown worthy of our bes efforts. The clock, still wound by local hands, ticks out local time, reminding us to spend our hours caring for our neighbors, educating our children, and conducting the business of the town with integrity.

The high level of participation in local issues by Marblehead citizens always surprises those who are used to soulless suburbs. Abbot Hall houses Archibald Williard's famous painting, "The Spirit of '76," and I do not doubt that the chiming of its bell has played a part in keeping that spirit alive.

In a world where the Internet beckons us all into cyberspace, the clock in Abbot H chimes as of old, calling upon those with sound of its voice to remember that life within this town is our responsibility, tha we break the bond of community at our peril. It reminds us that the good faith of the past still shapes the present, and t what we do today affects not only our neighbors, but also our descendants. ■

Linda Weltner writes a weekly column called "Ever So Humble" in the Thursday "At Home" section of *The Boston Globe*. She is the author of an essay collection, *Family Puzzles: A Private Life Made Public*.



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Work

The genius of contemporary American culture is our ability to turn just about anything into a pop phenomenon. The weakness of contemporary American culture is our short attention span. Warhol must have been thinking in dog-years when he observed that we would all get 15 minutes of fame. Fame today lasts one-seventh of that, at best.

The object of our current collective fascination is, strangely enough, work. Workplaces and workstyles now dominate the popular media, from business magazines that hype the latest trends with breathless wonder, to a badly drawn cartoon strip, to television shows set entirely in law offices. Shakespeare would be amazed.

Work today means more than a paycheck: It is a lifestyle. It is very nearly a cultural fetish. Business cards in the new e-industries carry job titles like "guru," "chief geek," and "evangelist" — perfect monikers in this age of irony.

Economists and futurists have long pointed to the rise of the knowledge-based economy (we seem to have skipped quickly through the "service economy" — probably because service is in short supply these days). Perhaps the cultural transformation of work is due to greater satisfaction in knowledge-based careers, which can be more intellectually and personally engaging than old-economy careers. Some of the new focus is undoubtedly due to a public fascination with the prospect of lottery-like sudden wealth. And some is due to the shared excitement that accompanies the discovery of any new frontier, be it the Internet, space, or the Western Territories.

And yet the new workplace, with its own set of stresses, has not brought relief from physical and emotional maladies. Employees today work hours that would shock 19th-century labor activists. Gen-Y dot-com executives endure feverish work and travel schedules in the hope of making a short-term killing; they sound much like the young China traders of 200 years ago, whose journals document their loneliness, physical hardship, and vulnerability to fluctuating markets and speculation.

This new workplace offers an enormous opportunity to the design community. We have an unusual planetary alignment: a sudden cultural focus on the nature of work; a strong economy; and very real business problems that cry out for physical solutions. Workplace design traditionally received little respect from the architecture community until the last recession, when interiors projects provided life-support for many firms. Today, architects are discovering new roles as both business consultants and designers, as they find ways to help their clients create corporate identities, manage rapid growth, and retain valuable employees. Corporate America is discovering the value of design. But as David Lathrop, one of our roundtable participants, points out, corporate America — like the rest of the country — has a short attention span. We must prove the value of design, reinventing the profession in the process, or risk becoming another commodity. No planetary alignment lasts very long.

Elizabeth S. Padjen FAIA
Editor

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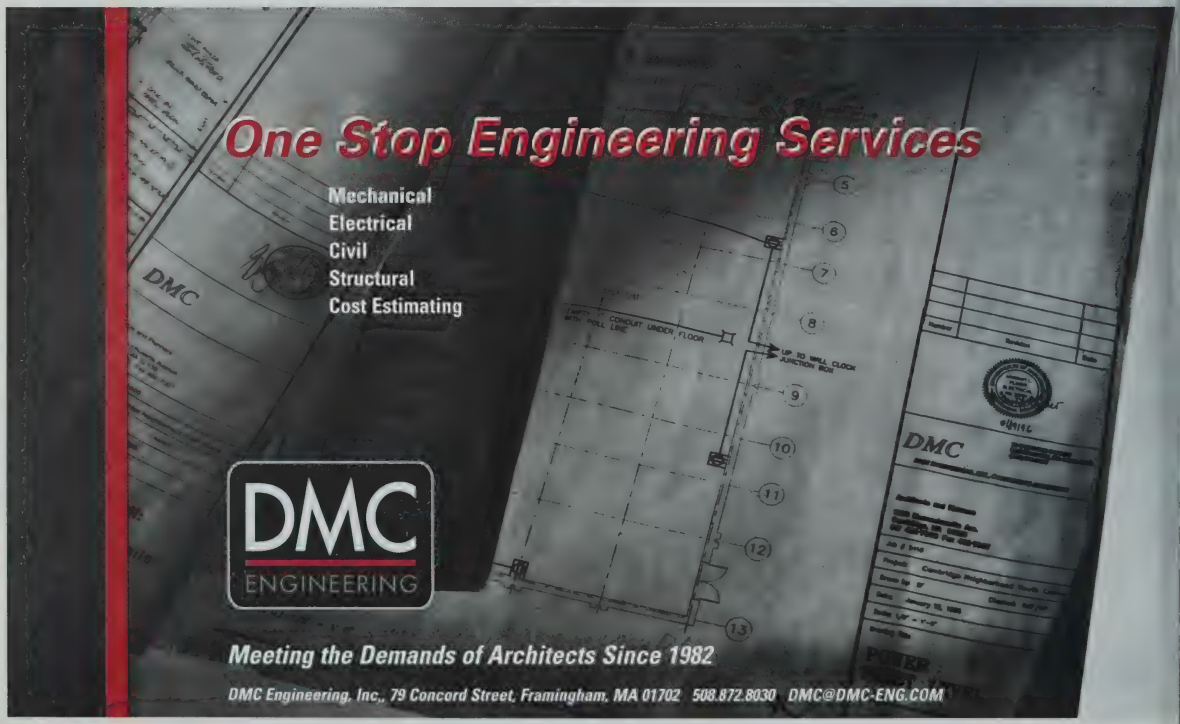
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Letters

Your spring issue on "Time" raises some provocative issues about heritage, memory, and the image that Boston seeks to project to the world. Jonathan Lane's argument for greater, centralized interpretation, and the designation of Boston as a World Heritage City segues seamlessly into Deborah Dietsch's blunt opening statement that "memory has become a tourist industry." Herein lies a cautionary note on the role of history in fostering the healthy evolution of any city, but particularly one as complex and delicately scaled as Boston.

History is clearly one of Boston's greatest strengths, and we have every reason to promote its celebration — provided the interpretive vision resists the overtly nostalgic impulse that can too often turn the city itself into a museum, and instead recognizes that the impulse for change has in fact created this history. Enlightened change must continue to be seen in a positive light. As we turn the millennium, there is growing awareness of the cultural and architectural heritage of the 20th century, particularly of the post-war period. Many of us are engaged in the effort to find appropriate ways to recognize these achievements and to celebrate their place in the greater continuum of the city's history without denying the historical imperative for evolution. Jane Holtz Kay, one of the great agents of our collective historic conscience, in her article "Boston, Lost and Living," sums this up in issuing a call for a larger vision, one which would take the healthiest aspects of heritage planning and fuse them with the larger physical and social challenges that Boston must face if it is truly to stake a claim as a World Heritage City.

David N. Fixler AIA
Principal
Einhorn Yaffee Prescott
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I would like first to express my pleasure in reading the Spring issue of *ArchitectureBoston*, which clearly articulates how Boston's past architecture informs the new and the ever-evolving built environment of Boston's future. Jonathan Lane's article, "The City Transparent," especially provocative, and it raises several issues about changes to Boston's urban fabric and the need to be respectful of the past while finding opportunities to better understand and appreciat both the past and the present.

While an active effort to interpret Boston's histor and the city's evolution since its founding would enhance the appreciation and knowledge of both resident and visitor alike, I feel that such an effor would be seen as an easy alternative to maintain-ing and creating a real sense of place and of time

We all have had the joy of experiencing special places in a visceral way, of encountering the unique character of other cities. The Vieux Carré of New Orleans and 18th-century Charleston are examples of places that cause us to pause to *feel* them before we attempt to understand them. For me, it is self-evident why Luxor, Egypt, is such a powerful experience: It is physically there with all its layers intact; a visitor understands it all by the simple act of being there.

While Lane explores several possible ways to mak Boston more "transparent," it is in his closing paragraphs that he touches on the paramount need for community leaders to "demand the protection of [Boston's] special qualities." Boston growth must be managed so that its patrimony informs the future and is not trivialized – the sad fate of the Old State House and many other landmarks as city traffic and development overwhelm the city. We need to honor the city w love, in which the creations of past Bostonians give so much delight as we walk its streets. We have the dual responsibility to be good stewards a well as to tell a wonderful story.

W. Lewis Barlow, IV, AIA
Senior Historical Architect
National Park Service
Boston

:FIRMATION FROM A FAVORITE PERIODICAL is always
isfying, especially when diverse perspectives expressed by
ominent designers and critics converge on a timely idea.
ur issue on "Design" (Winter 1999) gave that pleasure to
laptive Environments in several items — particularly in the
scussion of the South Boston Waterfront and its emphasis
inclusionary humanism as a design criterion. For two
ars, Adaptive Environments has promoted universal design
guide the redevelopment of the South Boston Waterfront
not just to accommodate, but also to create an urban
ighborhood characterized by human-centered design.

laptive Environments is a Boston non-profit organization
dicated to making places and things work seamlessly and
ll for everyone, across variation in ability and age. Our
unding premise is that design and designers are the
struments of that mission.

hat did we find so provocative in your winter issue to
nforce and expand our vision? First, the roundtable, "New
ritory," stimulated these influential representatives of the
ston design community to present design goals for the
uth Boston Waterfront to benefit people broadly. Ellen
nham-Jones presented one goal for redevelopment that
uld set a fresh vision for Boston. She suggested establishing
rformance criteria — such as developing office space that
uld be the most habitable, most desirable in the country.
hy don't we extend that challenge to the goal of making
South Boston Waterfront the most inclusive, user- and
itor-centric urban district in the country? Why not decide
make places that set a new standard for user satisfaction
d delight?

ie second feature we focused on was the interview between
drea Leers and Rafael Viñoly, "Unconventional Design,"
which projects were described by words like "easy,"
evitable," "joyful." Viñoly prides himself on building
ces that people love to inhabit. Responding to his lead,
ston should demand that experience for all users, and
ablish human-centered performance criteria to design a
w, Boston-flavored urbanism focused on welcome and
pport.

ie third article that particularly struck a chord with
was Jeffrey Stein's review of Jack L. Nasar's new book,
sign by Competition. Stein presented Stanford Anderson's
ndard for judging architecture: "Does it expand human
ssibility?" Could there be a more succinct and lofty
allenge, or one that is any less elitist?

e can make these choices in Boston. We can build on our
ditions of a city that is human-scale and pleasurable in its
ncept, urban form, and detail. But let's invent a new future
design founded in confidence that people, rather than
ruding on style, provide the center for good design.
e at Adaptive Environments thank *ArchitectureBoston* for
nsoring this urgently needed dialogue.

lerie Fletcher, Executive Director
orge Terrien AIA, Vice-President, Board of Directors
aptive Environments
ston

TOO BAD JEFF STEIN'S ARTICLE, "The Most Beautiful Building," about the Harleston Parker Award (Spring 2000) didn't appear in the early 1980s before Harvard unwisely decided to demolish the 1953 winner, Alston Burr Lecture Hall (pictured in the following interview with Hugh Shepley) to provide a vacant construction site for James Stirling's museum. As a Harvard undergraduate, I found Burr Hall a subtle yet inspiring building — a period piece like Gropius' Graduate Center, that nicely captured an era in architecture and fit in easily with its surroundings without trying to look like its neighbors. Although Stirling was a great architect, his museum between the Fogg and the Graduate School of Design seems to me his least successful work, a real disappointment. Where was the Boston architectural community while this was happening?

One building I was surprised not to see on the impressive list of Harleston Parker Award winners was Alvar Aalto's Baker House [at MIT], an even more memorable building from the same era.

G. Mackenzie Gordon AIA
Lakeville, CT

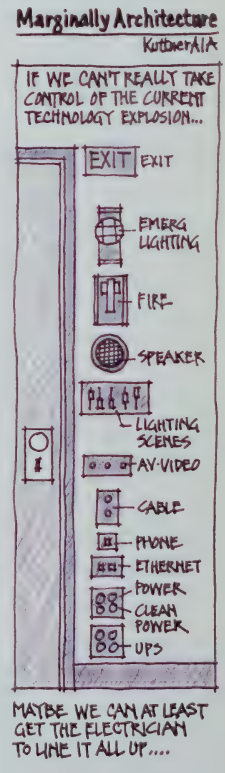
HUGH SHEPLEY FAIA'S COMMENTS in his interview with George Takoudes AIA (Spring 2000) ring true; his description of our profession is one with which I certainly concur. I would add that I know of no architectural community like Boston, where architects, even while competing for work, offer such support and sharing of information among peers. Hugh himself is a wonderful example of this; he has been kind enough to share some of his experiences and offer suggestions when I was seeking advice.

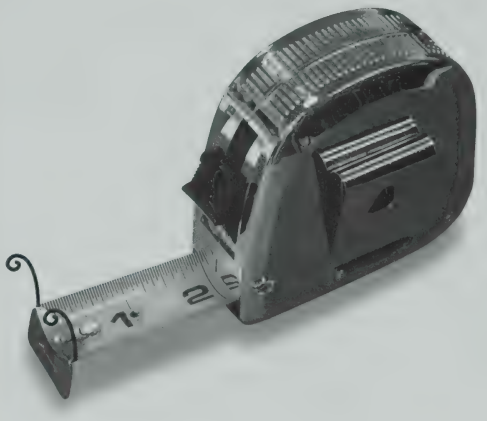
I found Hugh's remarks about the status of our profession in the Great Depression especially touching — and accurate. My father, too, was an architect, and the '30s were a difficult time indeed. I wonder what he would think of a profession today that is "on the computers" rather than "on the boards." We are indeed fortunate to have a colleague like Hugh to remind us of our professional heritage.

A. Anthony Tappé FAIA
Boston

We want to hear from you. Letters may be e-mailed to: epadjen@architects.org or sent to: *ArchitectureBoston*, 52 Broad Street, Boston MA 02109

Letters may be edited for clarity and length and must include your name, address, and daytime telephone number. Length should not exceed 300 words.





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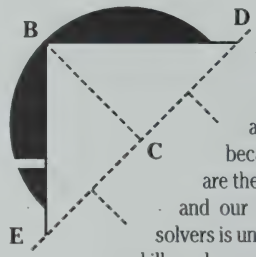
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The design of the workplace is a hot topic in business publications and, increasingly, in general-interest media. Maybe we owe it all to Dilbert, but office design has gained stature as both a cultural and social issue, reflecting new ways of doing business.

Taking Care of Business

The design of the new workplace



Participants:

Marty Anderson is manager of workplace research at Fidelity Corporate Real Estate in Boston.

Michael Bourque FIIDA is a principal of Sasaki Associates in Watertown, MA.

Dave Lathrop is the manager of research and development at Steelcase in Grand Rapids, MI.

Marc Margulies AIA is a principal of Margulies & Associates in Boston and a member of the BSA board of directors.

Joseph McMahon AIA is vice president and design director of Gensler Boston.

Elizabeth Padjen FAIA is the editor of *ArchitectureBoston*.

William Porter FAIA is a professor of architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where he chairs the Space Organization Research Group. He is co-author of *Excellence by Design : Transforming Workplace and Work Practice* (John Wiley, 1999).

John Uzee AIA is a principal of ADD Inc in Cambridge, MA.

Elizabeth Padjen: The buzzwords of the past — like "open-office systems" and "office landscapes" — have acquired a certain patina and now seem rather quaint. We don't even talk about "the office" anymore. We talk about "the workplace." Are we simply moving to the next business fad? Or are you finding real change in the ways that clients are looking at design?

Marc Margulies: There's an economic factor that makes it real. Clients are interested in providing a high-quality workspace that will help them attract good people. We're seeing enormous competition for talent.

Elizabeth Padjen: Are clients more sophisticated about the long-range effects of a good environment on the bottom line?

John Uzee: We're doing design work, but we're also, in effect, business consultants. Part of it is the HR [human resources] component that Marc mentioned. So we're now consultants on HR. But we're also marketing consultants, because the client typically has a product or a service and wants to know how to present that to its clients, visitors, and employees. Then there's another layer of advising related to real estate and asset management. But clients also perceive that design has a much bigger impact than they thought even 10 years ago.

Marty Anderson: Part of that is because of *Dilbert*, which brought corporate America and office life into focus for a lot of people. But a lot is due to technology, which has introduced new options to the workplace. And now we're seeing the influence of a tight labor market, in contrast to just a very few years ago, when loyalty was dead and companies could replace people at the drop of a hat. Employees today have tremendous power to ask for both flexible work options and improvements in their workplace. And as a result, these issues are a lot more mainstream than they've ever been.

Joe McMahon: There's no doubt that HR concerns are driving the new attitudes. But the new business environment is also a factor. There is so much volatility in the marketplace — whether someone is acquiring you or you're acquiring somebody else. Businesses are expanding, changing, morphing into different kinds of companies. I think clients have discovered the value of design goes far beyond aesthetics. They're looking to us for help with their real estate — and to do it in a way that doesn't cost them a lot of money.

John Uzee: Part of the problem is that no one knows which rules to follow. Back when everyone had a three-by-five desk with a computer in the corner, the rules were understood. But now you have to design for change and changing technologies. What happens with the flat screen? What happens when there's videoconferencing at your desktop and you need good acoustics? Everyone is guessing, because we're not sure which technologies will take root and have real value. You try to make sure the environment is flexible enough to adapt.

Marty Anderson: You're right. Initially, new technology was just layered on top of whatever the traditional work environment was. And now, not only are there more types of technologies, but they're also changing the way the workspaces are set up. We're constantly trying to project into the future, so we can adapt to something we can't even identify yet. It's further complicated by corporate culture. I think companies appear to be recognizing the value of design and its impact on productivity, but in corporate America they still want to see the numbers. And so there is a focus on trying to document some payback, some real value in what's being done. Markets can change and drop, and suddenly the interest in all this can wane, if in fact it's too costly.

Michael Bourque: Bill Taylor, the editor of *Fast Company* magazine, said, "We're living in an age of intense competition, where design is going to dominate all of our business decisions." That intense competition comes down to how and where a company markets a product or service. Design is part of all of that. In the past, we allowed design to become a commodity. Now it's an opportunity.

Marc Margulies: A few years ago, we spent a lot of time applying "standards" — this function gets an eight-by-eight space and it cannot be eight-by-eight-and-a-half. I felt like a design cop. Obviously we still work with guidelines, a lot of which are financial. But I see much more interest in exploring more productive, more flexible ways of working, particularly in the more explosive growth companies. They know that they can try out something different, because they can change it in six months, because they're going to be a different company anyway.



Photo: Nakaya

Client:
Zurich Direct
Call center
Tokyo

Design:
Gensler

Dave Lathrop: The truth is that space is a relatively small expense to organizations. They *think* it's big, because they think it's an opportunity to reduce costs. Anything that is an opportunity to reduce cost looms large in this intense business atmosphere. So the real question is: How can we drive the case that space matters to the behavioral evolution of an organization? That's what the highest purpose of space ought to be, and that's what the future of design ought to be. And frankly, all of us have done a bad job of paying enough attention to it. But I don't see the clients or the designers on a stampede yet.

Michael Bourque: I think that stampede is imminent, because we're facing a workforce that has great mobility. We will do anything right now to retain our employees. And there's a whole chain reaction of issues related to the work force. Entry-level lawyers are now getting $140,000 per year here in Boston — that immediately says something about how the entire organization is run, which immediately translates into something about space and about design.

John Uzee: But good design means different things to different people. Surveys of what people value most in their workspace always show that people care about air quality and temperature controls. Most end-users want flexibility and the ability to work with ease and comfort.

Marty Anderson: User control — the ability to make your space suit your workstyle — is very important. It allows people to respond to all of the other dynamic changes in their workplace. And that's a definition of design that is less about visual image, although visual image is usually what people get excited about and spend the most time debating.

Marc Margulies: Architects need to shift their definition of design. The environment that a lot of my clients want — that they want to emulate as they move from one place to another — is just a whole bunch of people working in a room. They like it because they can move their folding tables from here to there, and they can plug in wherever they want to. They think it's dynamic and entrepreneurial and has "buzz." The term "buzz" is actually very common. And that's what they want. It is not a traditional aesthetic.

Elizabeth Padjen: Obviously there's a certain kind of chemistry in that kind of environment. But is this a workstyle that is destined to stay? For so long, people coveted the corner office for privacy and its connotations of status. Did all those values suddenly disappear?

Marc Margulies: Some of them, yes. It depends upon how many shares of stock you have, because that corner office can be pretty irrelevant. And it's a whole different way of working. If you're not worrying about a corner office, then you can open your mind to all these other ways of working.

Michael Bourque: I think there have been fundamental changes in how people work. I'm a principal at Sasaki; we have 230 people. I refuse to be in an office. I need to hear what's going on around me. I need other people to hear what I'm doing. And I think that's happening in all types of businesses.

John Uzee: Status symbols have changed as well. The big corner office was about status, but it was rationalized — you needed the conference space and the lounge area, you needed comfortable seating and a big desk. Status now lies in complete flexibility — executives today can work out of a beach house, sending e-mail and videoconferencing. That's a status symbol.

Michael Bourque: There's also a change in job definitions. As people's responsibilities change, we see a big difference in the workspace they need.

Dave Lathrop: Our research is showing some of those changes. There's a demand for much more interaction, in every single kind of work. There's a demand for much more control. And there's a demand for much more concentration — the ability to get into a thinking process in a deep and extended way. Thinking is not something that is extraordinarily well-suited to those incredibly dynamic places.

Bill Porter: Work takes a variety of forms, which can occur in a variety of settings. And indeed it's this variety that is beginning to change the real-estate game entirely. We're seeing organizations that are providing space for companies that want to get out of the real-estate or facilities side of their business altogether. A possible implication of our discussion here is that a generic quality in the

Client:
Boston Consulting Group

Design:
Robert Luchetti Associates, Inc.



Photo: © Paul Warchol Photography, Inc

workplace might be successful. By generic, I mean a space that could be as good for one organization as for another. And that suggests that an organization can cease to use physical space as a means to project its image, but instead focus on physical space as a means to support its work.

Michael Bourque: I disagree strongly. I'm seeing quite a different trend — companies using their space to say what they're doing in business, what their product is, and what their service is.

Joe McMahon: But you could believe that they're looking for generic space if you listen to what they're asking you. A lot of them ask for the very same things. But at the same time they say they want the space to reflect their identity — or to help create their identity.



Marc Margulies: There's a big difference between a large company that has a culture that it is trying to share with new employees, and a small company that is trying to invent itself and is trying to develop a culture. They're manifested differently in terms of design. I can't tell you how many CEO's I've talked to who said, "I don't want to be just like everybody else. I don't want to be just another dot-com." There are a million dot-coms out there — how do you define yourself?

Dave Lathrop: Frank Becker at Cornell described three phases in the life cycle of an organization and the way it relates to workspace. He described them as "loose," "tight," and "elastic." The loose phase is the start-up, when no one is thinking about space and there are no design controls. You hire someone tomorrow and ask him to bring a chair from home because you don't have any chairs right now. The tight phase is defined by high controls as opposed to no controls. And the elastic phase involves choosing what to control. Or, said another way, in the loose phase, you have unplanned diversity. In the tight phase, you have planned uniformity. And in the elastic phase, you have planned diversity. But what if we framed the question of workspace differently? What if the charge was to make the users unbelievably happy and productive? That's not typically the design problem that's been presented to us. Dilbert has made Scott Adams a wealthy man because people don't like most of the spaces we provide.

Elizabeth Padjen: Dilbert's cubicles come from a corporate view of design based on the number of bodies on an organizational chart. But it sounds as if some companies and some designers are indeed rephrasing the question. I wonder how real that trend is. How prevalent is this new model of spaces that are designed to match a work style or a work process?

Marty Anderson: It's definitely a trend, and it's definitely gaining momentum. David talked earlier about whether a stampede was forming, and I would say that, in our firm, the stampede has already begun. It's a reflection of that "elastic" phase. We work with a couple consortiums of companies from a range of



Client:
Vitale, Caturano & Company, P.C.
Boston

Design:
ADD Inc

industries. A lot of them are high-tech companies; others include Coca Cola, Revlon, Amex, Citigroup, and Lilly. They're all addressing the same kinds of issues.

Joe McMahon: We've seen a lot of companies — and they're not just technology companies — that have a keen interest in looking at the work process as the design vehicle. And I think that's what keeps design from becoming a commodity.

Marc Margulies: One of the bigger problems is making a commitment to a design based on a work process when no one knows how long it's going to last. There was a time when you designed to the life of the lease — with a 10-year lease, we would design a 10-year space. We don't design 10-year space at all any more. Today, a client says, "We've got a three-year lease, but don't worry, we know we can sublease it. We expect to blow out of here in a year, even though we can only fill half of it now." You can't always argue for a lot of commitment to a particular direction.



Photo © Lucy Chen

Elizabeth Padjen: Then how can you know if you've done a good job? How do you measure the success of these kinds of spaces?

Marty Anderson: Ideally you would measure an absolute correlation between workspace and business performance. But no one is really there yet. My firm is trying to look at a family of measures, but it's very difficult in a knowledge industry. It's hard to measure output. We've been looking at three categories of measures. One is business performance, working with data produced by each business group. Another is the influence on more strategic issues, such as human resources and financial impact. Another focus is workplace effectiveness, using interviews and surveys to determine if the space is really supporting the work effort. Most of the information that is readily available is based on satisfaction surveys, which don't provide hard data.

Joe McMahon: You can also measure the real-estate costs, but that can be hard to define properly, too. You could have high construction costs, but you could also have very high productivity and income, based on having a better space.

Bill Porter: I would offer one additional measure. The users' involvement in the process is a very important component of their positive evaluation of a new workplace. And it can lead to positive change in unpredicted ways. In one of our projects, a renovation of a high-tech research workspace, my colleague Turid Horgen plunked the table that was going to serve as the meeting place right smack in the middle of a relatively narrow corridor. It made it almost impossible for people to move around the office. And as they would try to edge by when a meeting was underway, the leader of the group would invite them to join in. Hence, a lot of people knew what was going on: replanning the space. And as more activity circulated around this table, we found them using that table for their own project-planning purposes, quite separate from the space-planning exercise that was going on. It happened to work very well. People felt very much involved. And there were some interesting changes that evolved from it — the nature of their own meetings started to change. There was a two-way interaction in their work that hadn't happened before. The eventual design of the new space made room for this table, to institutionalize the table that had brought about the plan in the first place. But my point is that the space itself can induce change in the rules that govern how people behave.

Marc Margulies: You know, there's a corollary to that story that responds to the question about the measurement of success. Traditionally, we measured success by looking at the product. But another answer is to look at the process. Do you go through a process of engaging the end-users in the discussion so they can actually influence the outcome? And because they helped to influence the product, do they like the product better? Does it work better for them? It's a very different approach.

Dave Lathrop: I want to assert the importance of measurement. I'm in a unique position, perhaps, in that I get to talk to three or four different clients a week, people on the leading edge of these discussions. I don't talk to the people who want to buy more cubicles. And I make the plea to you all. The opportunity here is gigantic, but business doesn't have a very long attention span. Business is a left-brain enterprise. We need to begin to quantify the effectiveness of place against the three biggest things that organizations really care about: innovation; learning; and culture. And space matters in all three of those. Corporate America spends billions of dollars every year desperately trying to reinvent itself, but with a few exceptions, it's overlooking place as a seminal ingredient. The traditional design perspective doesn't sell to left-brained companies. We need to sell the importance of place with an integrated, socio-organizational approach backed by quantified data.

Elizabeth Padjen: You're also suggesting that designers need a different skill set today than they needed 10 years ago.

Dave Lathrop: Absolutely. Designers today need to be skilled at divining principles and telling stories that enable spaces to be created on a flexible infrastructure so that the user can "own" that place over time. It's more like urban planning, where you don't design the neighborhood. There's no need to do that, because people will do that over time. The culture of the neighborhood changes as generations of immigrants come and go. But what is necessary is an infrastructure that's based on the basic ideas of human community. The new skills facilitate the growth of a social network that builds community, which is where knowledge happens.

Bill Porter: The project I mentioned is a very good example of that. The leader of the group ended up with a very small workspace, much smaller than he'd had before. And we asked him whether he minded. He said, "Oh, no, I'm in a much larger space. I sit here, but then I go over there to do this, and I go over there to do that. In fact, my work is all over this place." His commitment to that way of working came over that long period of time of working with the designers and with his colleagues, developing a collective sense of what this project was about, and a collective ownership of the entire territory.

Marc Margulies: Which underscores another skill that's needed today. We need people who are knowledgeable and comfortable talking about design and leading a design discussion and getting to a solution. What we find is that we're literally designing with our clients — on laptops in front of them — changing drawings, facilitating the discussion, collaborating. That is completely different from the way we used to work.

Elizabeth Padjen: As Gen-Xers move into more senior positions, bringing a greater ease with technical skills, what kinds of changes would you predict in the design process? And will they bring a completely different notion of the ideal workspace? They probably won't have a memory of the corner office with the mahogany paneling.

John Uzee: I'm already working with some relatively young clients. They lead big companies, and they don't have a notion of the corner office at all. They're very informal, and they want the companies they lead to have that same informality. They're not interested in hierarchy.

Dave Lathrop: We're doing a fair amount of work right now with a company called Oxygen, which is a new-media company designed for women and children. The company has grown from four or five people just three years ago to 600 now. And what they've chosen for their physical manifestation is exactly like the culture of the company and exactly like their Web presence. It's unbelievably organic, unbelievably hip, very Gen-Y, very high-tech. Their biggest need is for places to concentrate. But they don't want private offices. They want a range of spaces. A set of settings, if you will. They've established a dynamic — a subculture — and a suite of offices isn't part of it. They're going to find a new way.



Photos: © Sherman Takata

Client:
Black Rocket
San Francisco

Design:
Gensler





Elizabeth Padjen: I wonder to what extent people are already solving the problem, not in terms of physical space, but in terms of time. Are they doing it by coming in at 6 o'clock in the morning when no one's there? Are they doing it by working at home at night and on weekends? I wonder how much the manipulation of time is affecting the demand on physical space.

Dave Lathrop: That's exactly what they were talking about as well. I talked to a couple of animators who come in at noon and do their interactive work until 5 or 6 o'clock. And then when things start to tone down, even though the place runs 24 hours a day, they can get a little more concentration time in the evening. So they view their day as basically broken into two halves, one for interacting, the other for concentrating.

Marc Margulies: And of course, some people solve the concentration problem by going to a "no-space": They put on earphones and listen to music. I personally think that it's antisocial and destructive to the basic design concept for the space.

Bill Porter: Dave's description of Oxygen brings up another aspect of the new workplace: If a company wants to promote its identity through the design of its physical space, it really needs to think in terms of extending that identity into its virtual space, into its Web presence as well. Which means that in addition to the other skills we've mentioned, good designers will need familiarity and a comfort level with working in virtual space as well as physical space. If you're physically visiting an organization, and you're also visiting it virtually, the experiences should share a family resemblance. That's one challenge. The second challenge is that the Web is becoming a tool for actually planning the space. It allows another kind of client interaction, allowing us to work both synchronously and asynchronously in ways that were not possible before. Most of the students in school right now are already comfortable using the Web in that way, so for them it's not a big leap. But for the older generations, it's a big one.

Elizabeth Padjen: That strikes me as another example of manipulating time, that potentially has an effect on physical space. If you're doing work on an extranet, that's work on your own time when you want to do it. You're not sitting in a conference room, and therefore someone doesn't have to design a 20-person conference room.

Dave Lathrop: We're already seeing that technology is in effect decoupling work activity from the workplace. You can do your work anywhere your organization allows. It remains to be seen how effective we as a social and psychological organism will be at adapting to group work decoupled from a shared place. Because if and when that happens, place will essentially have no relevance to the organization. If you look at the span of human history and the impact of technologies at various windows in time, almost every technology has had profound impacts on social structures. On the other hand, the social structures have endured, and there's every reason to suspect that will be the case now. How is it that a group of people can come up with ideas that no one of them is capable of coming up with individually? That may be the next big challenge for us — to make group spaces so compelling, that people choose to come to them even when it's possible not to.

We've been talking about a lot of hypotheses that will eventually get tested. My office has done some simple research that shows that a difference in 20 minutes a day in how an employee works — in time saved through shared activities, faster communication, faster access to people and information — completely changes the cost equation and the view of money spent on the workplace. I'll return to my plea. We need to tell the story more effectively. We don't need to prove the whole case. We just need to reduce the risk of trying something new. ■■■



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Code Change to Affect All Commercial Construction in Massachusetts

The Massachusetts Board of Building Regulations and Standards (BBRS) has adopted NEW ENERGY CONSERVATION REQUIREMENTS into the State Building Code (780 CMR). The new provisions will take effect on JANUARY 1, 2001, and will cover all new commercial and high-rise residential construction in the state.

BBRS will be offering FREE SEMINARS on the new Energy Code. The following schedule is for ENVELOPE seminars. (Sessions on Lighting and on HVAC requirements will also be offered.) Registration is required at least one week in advance. AIA members will receive CES Learning Units through the Boston Society of Architects. Please register by e-mail at www.state.ma.us/bbrs/register.htm or call 617-951-1433 x323. AM sessions run from 8:30 to 12:00, PM sessions from 1:00 to 4:30. Directions will be sent with confirmation.

FREE ENVELOPE SEMINARS

CITY	DATE	TIME
Peabody	2/2/00	1:00 PM
Boston	2/15/00	8:30 AM
Andover	2/23/00	1:00 PM
Peabody	3/9/00	8:30 AM
Swansea	3/15/00	1:00 PM
West Bridgewater	3/29/00	8:30 AM
Cambridge	4/6/00	1:00 PM
Northborough	4/18/00	8:30 AM
Northampton	4/26/00	1:00 PM
Andover	5/10/00	8:30 AM
Cambridge	5/16/00	1:00 PM
Wareham	6/1/00	8:30 AM
Northborough	6/7/00	1:00 PM
Pittsfield	6/21/00	8:30 AM
Newburyport	6/27/00	1:00 PM
Boston	7/20/00	8:30 AM
Wareham	7/26/00	1:00 PM
Needham	8/16/00	8:30 AM
Cambridge	8/22/00	1:00 PM
Yarmouth	9/20/00	8:30 AM
Boston	9/26/00	1:00 PM
Northborough	10/12/00	8:30 AM
West Springfield	10/18/00	1:00 PM
Andover	10/31/00	8:30 AM
Boston	11/9/00	1:00 PM
Peabody	11/30/00	8:30 AM
Boston	12/6/00	1:00 PM

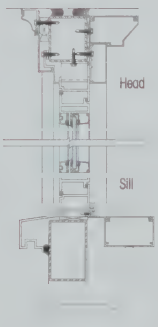


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Real or imagined?

Measuring success in the new office

by Jacqueline C. Vischer Ph.D.



The new office: how much real innovation is taking place?

Hardly a day goes by when we do not read or hear about the important changes taking place in office design. Consultants specializing in "organizational change" and "linking design with business goals" have appeared from both inside and outside the design professions. Some emphasize design, some are trained in organizational development, and others use research techniques. How effective are these different approaches? And how is new office design affected? Large companies (Nortel Networks) as well as small companies (Internet start-ups) and even the federal government (GSA Public Buildings Service) are experimenting with innovative work environments. We know little as yet about the effects of this experimentation on people, on their productivity and morale, and on the organization.

Francis Duffy, former president of the Royal Institute of British Architects and author of *The New Office*, has spoken and written eloquently about the fact that for the most part, office design is still in the dark ages. His research proves that our ideas of giving everyone a desk and supplying a few closed rooms for scheduled meetings have changed little over the last 100 years, in spite of massive changes in technology and the way business is done.

Not that companies and their designers don't try to innovate: Ideo Product Design in Lexington, Massachusetts, uses dense foam cubes to build moveable partitions for team meeting-space that can be reconfigured as project needs change. Anderson Consulting in Wellesley, Massachusetts, has moved all its management consultants out of their offices into a "free-address" or "hot-desk" workspace, where they sit at whatever desk is free when they come in and rely on an array of concierge services to support their work. And Ernst & Young Innovations Group in Cambridge has glass-walled offices, a large multi-media meeting-room and a central "agora" space to foster creativity and innovation. Based on a look at e-commerce companies hiring a young, dressed-down workforce, *The New York Times* recently described new trends in workspace design as "space for work and play." But there are also plenty of fast-growing technology companies putting people in workspace that is not innovative at all, lining them up in cubicles or rows that recall the grainy black-and-white office photos of the 1940s.

With all this choice in workspace comes a number of questions. How much real innovation is taking place? Or are we dressing up old ideas of the workplace with new furniture and colors and fancy terms like "hotelling" — shared offices available on a reservations basis? And what do we know about the effects on workers of different types of workspace? Do people work better in offices, cubicles, clusters, or rows? To find answers we need a different and broader array of design services, and we need statistically reliable research to tell design professionals and their clients whether office innovations like bistros, bright colors, moveable tables, and indirect lighting really make a difference.

Some companies are already struggling to answer these questions. Reductions in square-footage and the costs of new construction are clear and obvious advantages — but are people staying longer in their jobs, working better, and feeling more satisfied? Many organizations look for more communication and cooperation, dynamic teamwork, and team-based rather than individual-based work processes. Companies such as Ideo and E&Y Innovations Group believe that their workspaces help people be more creative, productive, and autonomous, generating more new ideas which are developed more quickly. Other companies are comfortable with more traditional yardsticks: a more dynamic image, more collaboration, and a more egalitarian approach to space allocation. But managers making these changes, as well as their designers, are going more on faith than on fact.

Design innovator Michael Brill, founder of BOSTI (Buffalo Organization for Social and Technological Innovation), is among those who maintain that the new concept of workspace is less related to physical design innovations (foam cubes, glass walls) than to the *process* of new space design. As shown by the recent experience of ad-agency Chiat/Day — in which an innovative and open hot-desk environment was eventually replaced by conventional enclosed offices — space innovation alone will not make the difference clients hope for. Many companies that have felt the need to overhaul and update their work environments have opted for less splashy solutions than Chiat/Day and have successfully attained the bottom-line advantages listed above — happier, more productive people, more communication, and lower costs — because they took the time to design a change-management process before implementing their new workspace. Hypertherm Inc., a manufacturing company in New Hampshire, recognized that the design of its new workspace represented an opportunity for organizational change and solicited the opinions of staff members from all levels of the organization. The result of this process — no longer or more costly than traditional design, but definitely different — is a major expansion in revenues for the company, a measurable reduction in time-to-market for new products, and a satisfied and stable workforce that expresses pride and pleasure in the work environment.

From all the experimentation in workspace that has gone on in recent years, we have learned a few important lessons. One is that employees almost everywhere resist workspace change, even when it is a clear improvement over what they have. People generally hold images of traditional workspace, and innovative office design cannot be implemented successfully unless employee attitudes are taken into account. Another lesson is that the process for making design decisions is more important today than it was traditionally because of the "menu" of workspace alternatives: Will employees work better in team-space, in shared offices, or at home? Should new furniture have lower or higher partitions? Should work surfaces be adjustable? Do employees need their own ventilation controls and their own "white noise" sound-masking systems? A third lesson is that we need to know more about how people perceive and use their space at work.

These lessons (and they are just the beginning) seem to indicate a new role for the architect and designer of office space. More effort needs to be spent on pre-design programming, on identifying user work processes. Questioning department managers on their head-count, filing, and technology needs is no longer enough. Designers must take the time to involve users more broadly, not only to find out how they work now, but also to help them project into an often unknowable future. Second, designers must invest more effort in defining and clarifying their clients' basic goals and values before rushing into design development. If not, issues that should have been raised at the outset often emerge later, resulting in extensive revisions that are frustrating for the designer and client alike. And third, designers must retain control, closely scrutinizing working drawings and construction decisions all the way through to occupancy in order to make sure that commitments to innovation are not lost in later negotiations about costs and materials.

Most importantly, these lessons suggest that Brill is right. We are already beginning to see that if we want people to embrace rather than to resist workspace change, the *process* will be as important as the *space*. And to help business owners and managers make the best workspace choices for their companies, we will need new ways of measuring success. The workplace is changing radically and rapidly. Change for the sake of change is expensive — and ultimately not worthwhile. Change for the sake of progress is a worthy goal. We need to be sure that we are making progress. ■■■

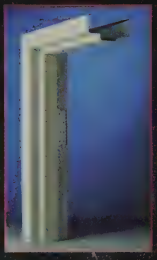
Jacqueline C. Vischer Ph.D. is president of Buildings-In-Use in Lexington, Massachusetts, a workspace planning, programming, and evaluation consulting firm. She is also director of the interior-design program at the University of Montreal in Canada.

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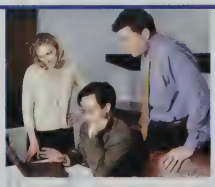
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Revealing Work

by Jessica Zlotogura



Innocently enough, post-war technology developed machines to ease the workload in our lives. "Innocence" is the operative word — who could have predicted today's insatiable appetite for consumer gadgets and office gizmos? And who could have predicted the fundamental shift in our relationship with our machines? Once, their moving parts were readily understood and easily repaired. Typists could immediately see which typewriter key had jammed. Today we sit in front of computers — typewriters in fancy boxes. The process by which the computer reacts is almost instantaneous. But do we understand how it functions? When it breaks, can we fix it? We are ever more dependent upon new technologies that paradoxically hinder our understanding of the true nature and consequences of our work.

This new ignorance of the way our machines work now extends to an ignorance of how things are made. Industry, revered in the early part of the 20th century, is now relegated to the edges of our cities and beyond — and largely forgotten. With fewer people living and working near industrial buildings, fewer people actually witness manufacturing processes. And yet there is an enduring fascination with watching people and machines at work: Office workers stop at construction sites; tourists watch fishermen haul the day's catch. Realizing consumer interest exists, several manufacturers have opened their doors to the public as part of a subtle marketing strategy. Today we see an increased popularity in factory tours, leading to an obvious conclusion: Why not adapt industrial facilities in the urban center to support a new flurry of economic activity and tourism simultaneously?

The desire to actively experience new and exciting phenomena traces its origins to the fast-paced, multi-sensory, in-your-face media blitz we have come to call today's culture. Enjoying the hidden learning process, we delight in sharing our newly attained factoids with others, forgetting we are subjecting ourselves to insidious marketing. A new model for urban development can harness this growing consumer appetite for education disguised as entertainment ("edutainment"), and the urban economy can reap the benefits: a chance to reclaim the light industry that moved out to the suburbs long ago. If the city can attract the types of businesses that understand the value of revealing manufacturing processes to visitors as a marketing tool, then the city can concurrently generate both potential jobs for its residents and low-cost entertainment attractions. Moreover, these industria facilities could occupy nonresidential zones of the city that are in need of economic rehabilitation. Traditionally, cities propose individual solutions to varied issues when considering urban development. Although these efforts might look at the overall picture, very few urban development models can meet job growth, economic, educational, and tourism goals simultaneously. A new model — "indutainment" facilities — can accomplish just that

Photo: Samuel Adams Brewery, courtesy Boston Beer Company



These ideas have been gaining quiet momentum for ome time now. Factory and "behind-the scenes" tours re an increasingly popular activity for vacationing amilies. When we visit Disney World in Orlando, lorida, we strain our necks to see the animators usily at work behind the glass. Vermont gives us ehind-the-scenes tours of Ben and Jerry's ice cream; ennsylvania has Hershey Park. A "Spirit of Ford" chibit in Dearborn, Michigan, tacitly promotes car les through the use of a full-motion assembly line nd rides. Carina the Cran-Cran girl leads us through ranberry history at Ocean Spray's Cranberry World n Nevada. Closer to home, the Boston Globe facility n Morrissey Boulevard displays newspaper printing rocesses. Restaurants also have eyed this trend in cent years. Sushi chefs toss their knives behind open ars, glassed-in production kitchens at Bertucci staurants let us know when our pizza is being ssed, and microbrewery restaurants exhibit brewery ats. That we choose to visit manufacturing facilities hile vacationing underscores the belief that the ltural meaning of work is shifting from an activity idden within a remote, anonymous warehouse to n activity on proud display. Watching an industrial rocess reveal itself is hip.

t the typical problem with these facilities is their cation. Many business owners relocated their dustrial facilities to the urban perimeter, purchasing rge tracts of inexpensive land that enabled them conduct manufacturing processes that did not terfere with residential communities. Locating dustry in urban centers causes controversy. Yet there e commercial and underutilized industrial districts ithin the city that can support these types of tivities and are in need of economic revitalization d new commercial tenants. Placement of industry at educates and entertains us makes the city comprehensible from a different perspective. And taking advantage of a large customer and labor pool appeals to business owners.

Certain types of industries can also support greater awareness of issues central to the survival of our cities. What if a large recycling plant was located within the city's perimeter? Schoolchildren might tour the facility, learning about the disposition of tons of trash created everyday in their community. What if computer-assembling facilities were brought into the city? The "new economy" would suddenly seem real, not virtual. What if food production — large-scale bakeries, processing plants — was brought back to the city? On-site shops or restaurants, in facilities designed to reveal the making of familiar foodstuffs, could generate repeat visits from local consumers as well as visiting tourists.

The buildings needed to support manufacturing processes can simultaneously serve other needs as well. A food preparation company could conduct cooking classes. A watch production facility could offer time-management classes. A motorcycle manufacturing plant might offer defensive driving classes. A sneaker production plant might offer physical-fitness classes or an athletic facility. This model of multi-use facilities encourages the combination of different, but symbiotic, businesses under one roof to create an environment conducive to learning or entertainment that also generates economic value for the city.

Despite immersion in a world chock full of black-box and virtual gadgets, people find themselves searching for low-tech answers to daily stresses — witness the surging popularity of gardening, cooking, and crafts. Our need to understand our material environment is not easily abated. Although virtual factory tours are readily downloaded, there is something the virtual world cannot provide in the comfort of our homes. Regardless of the high-tech speakers attached to our computers, we cannot experience the deafening noise of a Stanley hammer manufacturing plant. Computer monitors cannot transmit the smell of hop blossoms or the taste of malted barley, a crucial part of the Sam Adams microbrewery tour. Broadband Internet connections cannot deliver the heat of a bakery oven. As it turns out, real-life experiences are irreplaceable and not yet available in downloadable files. ■■■

Jessica Zlotogura is an intern architect at Tsoi/Kobus & Associates in Cambridge, MA. She received her Master of Architecture degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in January 2000.

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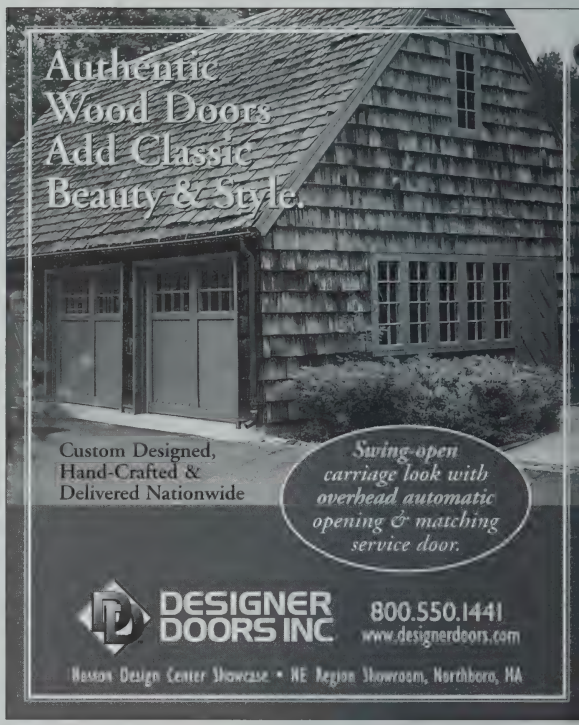
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Workers inspecting
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The Changing Landscape of Labor

by Michael Jacobson-Hardy

In 1989, I began to photograph factories and mills in New England in order to demonstrate visually the effects of the changing economy on working people. Many of the workers I interviewed felt our nation had turned its back on them. One said, "I've been working in this factory for 40 years and no one's ever asked to take my picture." This made me want to make dignified portraits of workers as a way to contradict the notion that only movie stars, presidents, and college-educated people deserve recognition. We live in a society in which social class plays an important role, and I wanted to know more about what working-class people had to say. The factory seemed to be a good place to begin.

Doris LaValley and "Big Mike" Ro
making machine fittings at
Yankee Hill Machine Company,
Northampton, Massachusetts, 199

I believe that making things is important. For many people, factory work has been a way to enter the workforce, a way for immigrants to begin a new life in this country. And we are throwing it away. The new technology requires college-educated people, and those who do not fit in fall behind. We have internalized the sense that working with your hands is dirty work. But many of our parents and grandparents worked in these mills and factories. "We were like a family," said a woman rag-room worker in a paper mill. She — like so many factory workers — lost much more than a job when her mill shut down.

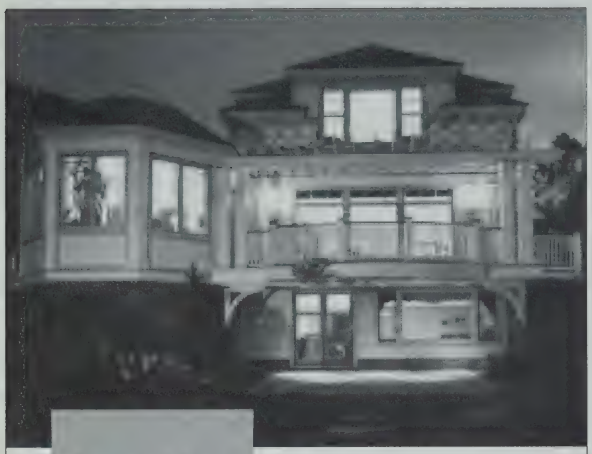


Photos © Michael Jacobson-Hardy

Michael Jacobson-Hardy lives in Northampton, Massachusetts. His work has appeared in numerous exhibitions, both in New England and nationally. The photographs included in this photo essay are from his book *The Changing Landscape of Labor: American Workers and Workplaces* (University of Massachusetts Press).

Joe DoVale moving computer hardware out of Wang Laboratories, Lowell, Massachusetts, 1993





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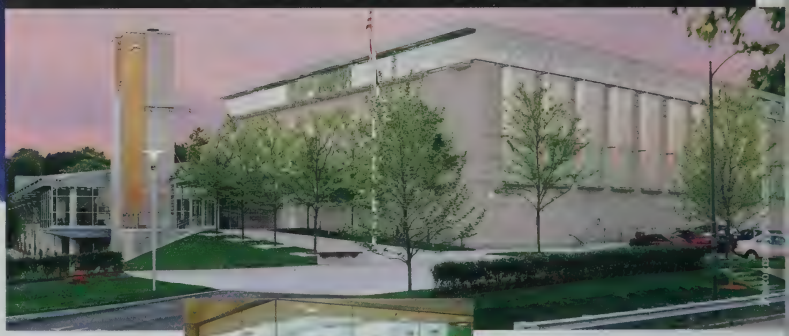
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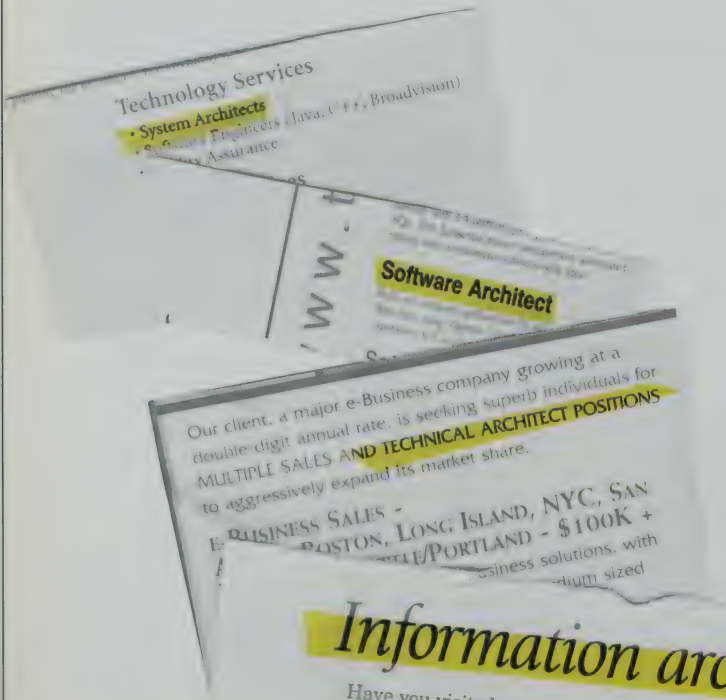
The Place of Work

Looking for architecture in the real world

by Wellington Reiter AIA

"...I like using this real-world metaphor: If this were the construction industry, it would consist of architects, general contractors, and trades-people. The Internet-consulting space lacks architects. [Our company] is a strategy-led firm starting with architect-like thinking to ensure that what we build will actually work for you."

Anthony Tjan, co-founder and executive vice-president of Zefer, an Internet consulting firm, as quoted in *Red Herring*, March 2000.



The notion of the "changing" workplace has been current for so long that "evolved" workplace might be more appropriate. But the place of work — not its geographic location but its position in the larger cultural milieu — is still largely unresolved. For recent architecture graduates, the locus of their future work frequently lies outside the profession's previously acknowledged boundaries. The reasons for these defections are multiple: compensation, specialization and, undoubtedly, the lure of new technology. But most importantly, these studio-trained graduates are finding a flattering reflection of what they perceive themselves to be — designers, thinkers, leaders, and shapers of new environments — in the visually rich digital economy. In addition, they are assuming immediate responsibilities that entry-level architectural positions rarely offer (not to mention financial rewards commensurate with their student loans). This shift away from practice represents a profound challenge to the schools and to architecture offices, and is destined to transform them both over the next several years.

This new employment landscape is the result of the convergence of three seismic forces: a robust economy; high expectations fueled by the indulgent academic studio system; and the urgent, seemingly limitless, possibilities associated with homesteading on the Internet. Like the design studio, e-business is a self-generated, "build-it-and-they-will-come" exercise. Capitalizing on a perceived need, a thriving dot-com requires strategy, technical execution, and a marketing campaign designed to capture an audience. This same recipe could easily describe the studio experience that is the curricular cornerstone of most schools of architecture. Students must reconcile competing bits of information (social, environmental, technical, aesthetic), synthesize them into a viable whole and, finally, package the effort in a seductive format. A premium is placed on ideas, technical virtuosity, and showmanship. This version of the architect as a freewheeling arbiter of design — the one that the cyber-world likes to borrow as a template — presents an artificial picture of professional practice, but it resonates with those incubating the next "New New Thing."

Of course, young architects aren't suddenly moving out of the classroom and into the boardroom with regularity. But they are rubbing elbows with their fellow graduates in business, media, and other fields who are. For students of architecture, cross-registration in other academic departments once

ocused on polishing liberal-arts credentials; now is more often motivated by the exploration of areer or business hybrids. Even architecture classes — specially those exploring new technology — deliberately point to alternative careers. Design is being isengaged from the particulars of architecture and epositioned within a larger cultural and economic ontext. The stalwart architectural periodicals now ompete with a new breed of hip business magazines or the allegiance of the student. *Fast Company, Red Herring*, and others have given rise to the notion that career is not a function of a university degree but, nstead, of an awareness of technology-enabled pportunities — combined with the skill to harness nem. As Bill Mitchell, dean of the MIT School of rchitecture and Planning, notes, "Architecture is no nger simply the play of masses in light. It now mbraces the play of digital information in space."

or many established practitioners, responding to Mitchell's notion would require nothing short of the omplete overhaul of their businesses. But for today's udents, this new world-view merely places buildings n one of many subsets of "information architecture." ccordingly, newspapers are brimming with job stings for "architects" that, more often than not, ave nothing to do with real construction. The ijacking of the term "architect" is, of course, a ntrivance of the software industry and is either attery or an annoyance, depending on one's erspective. But this word-play, intended to impart ubstance on behalf of an industry whose products are hereal, unseen, and perpetually outmoded, seems to old real value as well for conventionally trained chitects wanting to expand their territorial claims. rew Miller, a recent graduate who was recruited by rilogy, one of the most dynamic software companies n the industry, comments, "I found that the majority f constructed architecture rarely held the potential r exploration that really interested me. My ducation had, in fact, prepared me to think outside f the box that held the majority of what I would call ie profession." Allen Tsai, who landed a position mediately after graduation as the director of design d development for Mascot.com, makes a similar bservation: "I was initially attracted to architecture ecause it was a field in which design concepts sulted in real, concrete effects in our everyday lives. nd the role of the architect as the concept generator as paramount…The very fact that there is a valid oice between traditional architectural work and formation design indicates that there is a great deal f similarity in the conceptual underpinnings of the o fields."

Some five years ago, I chanced upon an intriguing but small media-design company that, at best, had a staff population of a half-dozen. Three years later, I attended that same company's holiday party, where the CEO, then just over 30 years old, took the stage in a Boston night club and rallied his now 100-plus employees (some of whom were my former architecture students) by declaring, "There are no ideas without a market."

In the course of my architecture training, I don't recall the words "idea" and "market" ever being captured in the same sentence. Architecture was presented as something representative of our highest cultural aspirations yet incongruously absent from daily experience. Even for those close to the profession, Architecture-with-a-capital-A — the "ideas" component of the equation — is most often experienced vicariously through periodicals or in darkened lecture halls. By turning toward alternative career paths, the next generation is communicating its frustration with conventional architectural practice. Many young designers are unwilling to be tied to a poor business model and relegated to a servant class as their colleagues in adjacent, technology-driven design disciplines go about turning our lives inside out. From their point of view, they are not bypassing architecture, but finding it in new arenas.

Interestingly, many of these young "wayward" architects report that one of the real pleasures of their work comes from a focus on the users of their products. This is in marked contrast to the current fascination with computer-generated form and the fetishizing of "new materials" within the discipline of architecture. Obviously, if a gadget malfunctions, the software crashes, or the Web interface is difficult to navigate, that designer has failed, and the company suffers immediately. Buildings that similarly fail to satisfy the needs of their users must simply be tolerated, or renovated. Although the computer can never match the immediacy or intimacy of contact with a genuine work of architecture, traditional practice cannot connect architects and their end-users with the speed and ferocity encountered by the Web designer. In many respects, the near instantaneous feedback loop in cyberspace has created a hyper-design practice that is as challenging as any. For better or worse, our best graduates are rising to meet it.

Wellington Reiter AIA is a principal of Urban Instruments, Inc. in Newton, MA, and associate professor of practice in the MIT School of Architecture and Planning.

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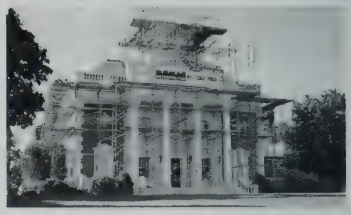
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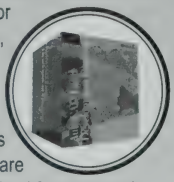


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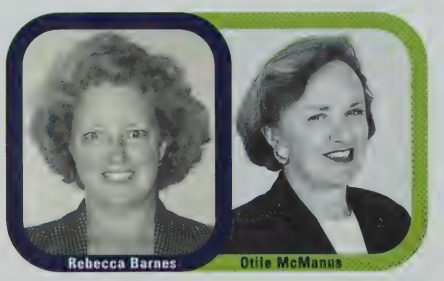
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Work, Life, Change

Rebecca Barnes FAIA talks with Otile McManus

Rebecca Barnes FAIA recently founded Barnes Resources Group/City Strategies in Cambridge, MA, continuing a distinguished career in planning and urban design, in both the public and private sectors. Previously the director of architecture and urban design at Frederic R. Harris, Inc. in Boston, she also has served as the assistant director for planning in Seattle and as the manager for urban design and public facilities for Boston's Central Artery/Tunnel project. She is vice president/president-elect of the Boston Society of Architects.

Otile McManus is director of special projects at Corcoran Jennison Companies. She is a former reporter and editor at *The Boston Globe*, where she wrote "By Design," a column on architecture, urban planning, and development issues.



Otile McManus As an observer of the architecture profession, I sense that the field is changing dramatically. You — as a woman in what's been dubbed an "old man's profession" — are a good example of some of that change.

Rebecca Barnes Actually, there's some comfort in that phrase — it's meant to suggest that your best work comes after age 50. But I'm glad I hadn't heard it at the time I was considering a career in architecture.

Otile McManus How open was the field to young women when you started?

Rebecca Barnes I remember thinking as a 30-something-year-old architect that when the principals retired — they were all men in their late 50s or 60s — and men of my generation took over, things would open up. The older generation could, at best, think of me and other women professionals as their daughters, wanting the best for us but not really thinking of us as their younger equals. To some extent, I think I was right and that my generation of male architects has an ability to think of women peers as partners, just as women architects of my age think of men as peers and partners. Even so, we don't have many examples of gender-integrated partnerships, aside from those of married or otherwise intimate partners. And I wonder why, and whether this will change in the next generation. I think mixed-gender partnership is a good indicator of real gender equity in a firm.

Otile McManus What drew you to the profession in the first place?

Rebecca Barnes It occurred to me that architecture would be a good way to live life. It seemed to me, looking at it from the outside, that there were so many things you could do with it that you could never get bored and never be at the end of it. And that's turned out to be true. It's a way to make your way through the world. And one thing I got from architecture school, besides a visual education, was the sense that I could make changes in the world — that an individual can make things happen.

Otile McManus I've never thought of architecture in that way — change made visible.

Rebecca Barnes It's the upside of the arrogance that people associate with the Howard Roark image of the architect. I'm sure there are other educations that do that for people, too, but architecture school really worked for me in that way. It was undoubtedly reinforced by the influence of the Vietnam war and the civil-rights movement. But that basic presumption — that one person can make a change — has followed me throughout my career.

Otile McManus How many women were in your chitecture class at the University of Oregon?

Rebecca Barnes It was half women — which was nusual then, but probably more typical now. But omen still represent only a small percentage of the rofession — about 18 percent.

Otile McManus Have women pushed the practice f architecture in different directions? Do they ractice differently? That seems to be true of many uccessful women in other fields — they don't do ings in the traditional way.

Rebecca Barnes Maybe that's true — women tend be the ones who are taking architecture toward nconventional or non-traditional practice. Mentor- g might have something to do with it. The women hom I used as role models were not architects, so y transition to a non-traditional career path seems atural to me. The only strong, older women chitects I met early in my career were in partner- ips with their architect spouses. I remember inking about quitting because it all seemed so hard, closed. The design role seemed almost untouch- le, because there are so few real design positions d they are so closely guarded. I consciously decided, about the age of 35, to stay and fight the battle, at I would not become another statistic of a woman ained as an architect who found another track more latable. And I wanted to help carve a wider path r other women to follow.

Otile McManus Which you've done by following unconventional path.

Rebecca Barnes Well, it's certainly more fun not do things in the traditional way. I left the private ctor for the public sector because I saw better portunities to have more meaningful influence. nd, of course, I later came back to the private sector pursue still other opportunities. But I don't think ere's that much difference in the public sector and e private sector. They both have bottom lines and ey both have missions, although, in my idealized sion, the public-sector mission is broader. But s not a huge difference. My work has always been at e intersection of the public and private sectors.

Otile McManus Moving back and forth between ose worlds, you have been both a client and a nsultant. What have you learned about the client lationship?

Rebecca Barnes Architecture school trains you to be the design leader. But it turns out that in practice, most of your time has to do with everything but that. One of the most important things I heard in a class at the Boston Architectural Center was that the profession was changing and that we had to start thinking of ourselves as team players. That was probably in 1972 — way before the media picked up on that idea. That was one of the first things I heard about architecture, and I took it pretty seriously. That's all since been articulated and institutionalized in the profession over the course of the last 30 years. It's not what you'd call a long tradition. But it has fundamentally changed the way we work with clients — as well as with others in the industry. Boston has produced leaders in a related trend, which is making connections among allied professions, so that contractors, lawyers, bankers, architects, and engineers all talk to each other and form relationships that result in more work, better work, and more satisfying work. That comes from the sense of being part of a team.

Otile McManus Do you set up a distinction between your work-life and your "life-life"?

Rebecca Barnes I think I do, but a lot of my time is work-life. I think people struggle with the "life-life"/work-life question, but I think it may be an artificial distinction. Not that everything is work, but your work is a way of looking at the world. It's a continuum.

Otile McManus Gabriel Garcia Marquez said, "The only new idea that could save humanity in the 21st century is for women to take over the management of the world."

Rebecca Barnes I don't believe that. I don't believe it at all. I think there's merit in doing it together — men and women. Although I think you can make the case that women in our culture are socialized to know what other people are feeling in order to resolve conflicts. It's our culture's training for being a mom. You learn to think about other people's visions and issues — how to collaborate. The language of the workplace has changed so much in my career. Today, it's not only OK, but even forward-looking, to talk about "team" and "collaboration" rather than "win" and "beat." We don't necessarily practice it all the time, but we can talk about it. Maybe that's the result of having more women in the workplace.

Otile McManus It's certainly a real shift, but clearly discrimination still exists.



Rebecca Barnes And a lot of it is pretty subtle. It usually not overt, which is why we still have trouble influencing change. There's a lot of tokenism. I've received a number of calls from men looking for women for senior positions in their offices, because they believe that clients who employ women in decision-making roles want to see women on consultant teams. And that's probably true. In my experience, the best employers of women are firms in which the partnership includes either a woman or a minority male — perhaps because they both understand tokenism and don't doubt the worth of others in a similar situation. There are still other forms of discrimination, too. "Status discrimination is one — the assumption that an employee — man or woman — who is single and/or childless can be laid off or paid less, with less guilt on the employer part, because a family is not put into jeopardy. At the same time, I understand that discrimination is based in human nature — on the ease of empathizing with those most like oneself.

Otile McManus I certainly empathize, coming from journalism, which has been a real old-boys' network. I've taken myself out of it. What would promote real change in the architecture profession?

Rebecca Barnes Numbers are powerful. Real change can only come from women entering the profession in greater numbers, until we're 50 percent of all architects. And then it won't be an issue. In the meantime, talking is important — among women, so they understand and share their experience, and with men friends and colleagues — to add to their understanding and to demonstrate that we want change. This is about significant cultural change, and that is a long, slow process marked by occasional milestones. When women constitute more than a third of all registered architects, that will be a milestone worth celebrating. When at least a third of all architecture firms have women partners, that will be worth shooting off fireworks. And when we can discuss women's issues comfortably with our male colleagues and bosses, without rancor and without being seen as whiners, that will be the day we can die and go to heaven knowing our job is done. ■■■

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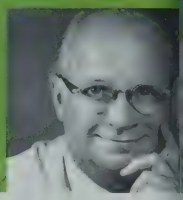
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Two Views:

In the last decade, skirmishes have erupted nationally between the otherwise congenial architecture and interior-design professions over the licensing of interior designers.

by Peter Steffian
FAIA, NCARB



Peter Steffian FAIA, NCARB, is the 2000-2001 president of the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards. Since 1994, he has also served as the chair of the Massachusetts Board of Registration of Architects, of which he has been a member since 1989. He is a principal of SBA/Steffian Bradley Associates in Boston, a firm practicing architecture, interior and urban design.

Massachusetts interior designers are now proposing legislation that would allow them to practice "interior architecture" under the name "interior design." Under this proposal, a license to practice interior design would be granted to those who have obtained a degree from a two-, three-, or four-year academic program in interior design accredited by the Foundation for Interior Design Education Research (FIDER); completed a three-year internship; and passed an examination administered by the National Council for Interior Design Qualification (NCIDQ). This act would also grandfather all who claim to have been practicing interior design for 15 years — regardless of education or examination — and allow designers who have been grandfathered in other jurisdictions to practice in Massachusetts through reciprocal registration. Architects could not offer "interior design services" or call themselves "interior designers" without passing the NCIDQ exam and becoming registered interior designers. This is senseless, since architects are highly qualified and are already legally practicing interior architecture/design.

In 1996, over 80 percent of California's interior designers were certified through grandfathering without passing the entry-level NCIDQ examination. In Minnesota, less than 17 percent of certified interior designers passed the NCIDQ examination. How many Massachusetts interior designers have qualified for and passed the NCIDQ exam? I believe the number is small, too small to justify a registration program, without grandfathering large numbers.

The principal interior-design associations, International Interior Design Association (IIDA), American Society of Interior Designers (ASID), and NCIDQ, talk about strengthening their system of education, training, and examinations to ensure that licensed interior designers can cope with life-safety issues. They claim to use the education, training, and examination of architects as their model. If the interior designers want to practice interior architecture, they should become architects.

Do we want a sub-specialty in architecture practiced by non-architects? In medicine there are many certified sub-specialties; however, everyone must become an MD first. If interior designers want to be a sub-specialty, they should be architects first. In the profession of planning, there is no requirement for registration. Instead, that profession has established rigorous requirements for highly respected professional self-certification.

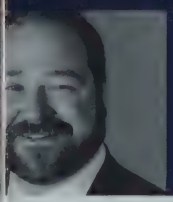
Interior designers have certification through NCIDQ — though it is not nearly as stringent as the requirements for architectural registration in Massachusetts or certification by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB). Both Massachusetts and NCARB require a five-year academic degree (although many are six years or more) from a program accredited by the National Architectural Accrediting Board; a structured internship monitored by NCARB/AIA; and passing the nine-division, 36-hour comprehensive Architects Registration Examination directed at testing competency in public health, safety, and welfare issues.

Architectural education, training, and examination cover a broad spectrum including: materials; structural engineering; and mechanical, electrical, and fire-protection systems. Architects learn building codes, zoning codes, wind and earthquake forces, requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), contracts, and much more. Of great importance, architects learn to synthesize architecture with engineered building systems. Architects, if they are not designing technical structural, mechanical, electrical and fire protection systems, are taught to understand the principles of such systems, recognizing and properly dealing with issues of public safety throughout the complex design of buildings and their interior architecture. Interior designers are not.

In an NCARB national survey of building code officials, 86.5 percent answered that they rely on architects and engineers to ensure that the designs of substantial buildings meet the performance standards of building codes. Over 87 percent agree that in order to protect public health, safety, and welfare, architects and engineers should be required to conduct on-site observations of the construction of substantial buildings. This is required in Massachusetts and is not an activity interior designers are qualified to perform.

It's about public safety. That's why I oppose interior-design registration. ■■■

The Licensing of Interior Designers



by David Stone, IIDA, IFMA

d D. Stone IIDA, IFMA, is
ident of the New England
ter of the International
ior Design Association,
h includes the Canadian
inces of Quebec and the
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ciates in Cambridge, MA,
e he is senior interior
ner.

"Interior design licensing" — simple words that have created much spirited debate. All the arguments boil down to two important questions: What role does the interior designer have in protecting the public's health and safety? And what constitutes a barrier to the rights of interior designers and architects to earn a living?

Many of our architectural colleagues who are members of the AIA and the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) maintain that interior designers do not affect health and safety issues. I disagree. I have practiced interior design in both large and small offices, in firms run by architects and in firms run by interior designers. I have been responsible for health and safety issues: egress; handicap accessibility; and flame spread/fire safety codes — usually without the oversight of an architect. Moreover, many of the notable local and national fire disasters and sick-building syndrome cases have been attributed to interior finishes, not to building construction. Since most design firms employ interior designers to select finishes and materials and assign them the responsibility for those selections in their projects, it stands to reason that these designers should be qualified by measurable standards.

Interior-design education at the university level, through programs accredited by the Foundation for Interior Design Education Research (FIDER), and the qualification examination developed by the National Council for Interior Design Qualification (NCIDQ) include a focus on the technical aspects of materials testing and standards. Continuing education addresses the changing technical requirements of the profession. I submit that practicing, "qualified for licensing" interior designers are more knowledgeable with respect to current interior life-safety issues specific to space planning, finishes, and materials than most practicing architects. Our contributions, both as lead designers and as members of collaborative teams, are more important and more complicated than at any time in the design professions' history. The necessity for establishing standards recognizable to the public, like the "RA" (registered architect) or "PE" (professional engineer) designations, is another important aspect of regulation.

No nationwide interior-design legislation has subscribed to the notion that architects are excluded from earning income by providing interior-design services. The proposed "practice act" legislation in Massachusetts does not state, nor does it intend, that licensed interior designers replace architects in their roles as building professionals. This legislation proposes to give the public the confidence that licensed interior designers are completely up-to-date with all aspects of interior life-safety issues. This is the same public confidence that assumes all registered architects possess complete knowledge of the building envelope's life-safety issues. This legislation proposes to raise the bar on the customers' faith and trust in the abilities of the licensed interior designers they hire, and it addresses a comprehensive improvement in the quality of professional services.

Until we, as a collective body of building-design professionals, concur on the impact that the qualified interior-design professional has on the protection of the public's health and safety, we are neglecting the opportunity to advance quality design in general. Until we combine our specific areas of expertise under the mutually respectful umbrella of professional registration, we are forfeiting opportunities to create safe, meaningful spatial experiences for everyday life. Until we agree to the higher level of professionalism that the licensed interior designer will bring, we will have missed opportunities to use our collective resources to construct a lasting impact on the lives of future generations.

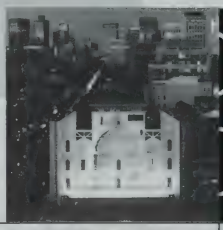
Let us respect the concept that a variety of professionals is not only qualified but also required to address the public's need for safety in the built environment. Let us come together and subscribe to the position that specialized education serves the best interest of the public and advances a better designed building. Let us all support the licensed practice of interior design. ■■■

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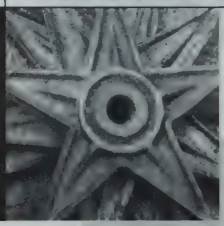
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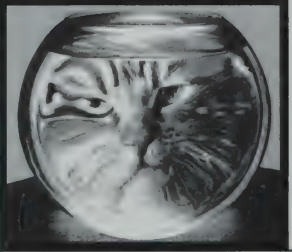


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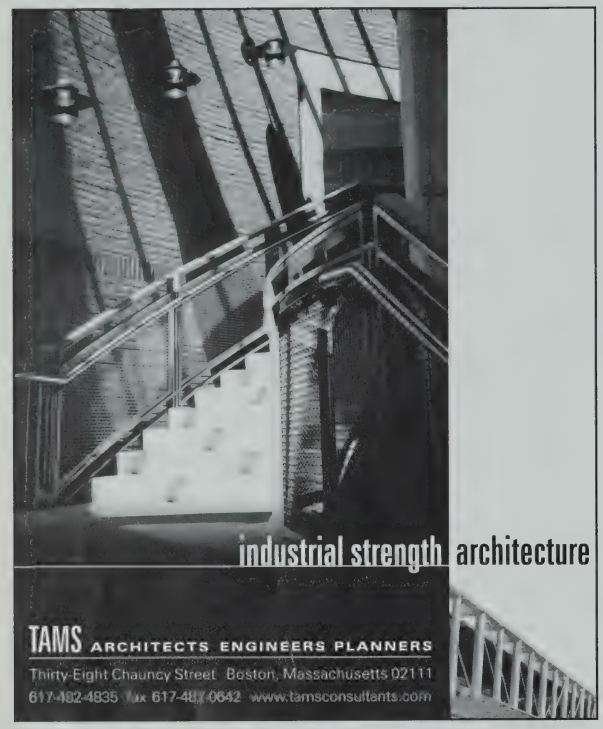
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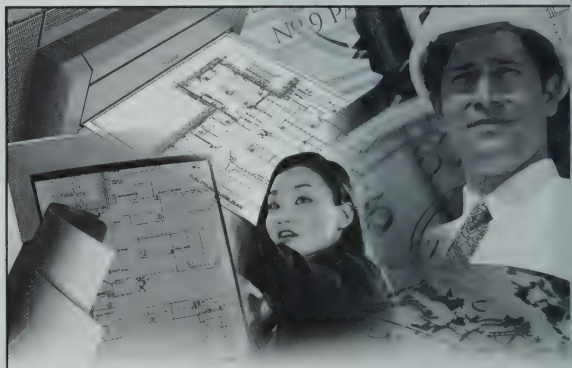


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Covering the Issues

Periodical roundup

by Gretchen Schneider



We're working on it... Is the New Economy changing our workspaces? So argues *Fast Company* in its April issue. Chris Salter, in "Designed to Work," profiles Herman Miller's new Resolve (as in "re-solve") systems furniture. With amorphous shapes and 120-degree angles, this out-of-the-cubicle design is intended to "reflect how people *actually* work, rather than how they *think* that they work." That's assuming you still go to your own office. London-based Regus Business Centres assumes that you won't. In "Office of the Future," Salter examines that other emerging possibility. Regus operates "instant offices — business centers around the world that are fully furnished, fully equipped, and fully staffed" — to be rented for an hour to years. You can be up and running in St. Louis or Shanghai as soon as you step off the plane.

House of cards?... "Architect Peter Eisenman's 1971 House III in Connecticut is an icon of late Modernism," writes Charles Gandee in the March *Talk* magazine, "a monument to a time when it was more important to be 'pure' than practical. It's also a ruin." Gandee's statement, with Jason Schmidt's striking then-and-now photos documenting 30 years of deterioration, tell it all. That time, says Eisenman, "was an amazing period — of enormous energy, conviction, passion. We've all moved on..." These pictures are well worth their thousand words.

Beige is boring... "If we learned anything from the barbaric old '80s, we learned that more is not enough. We want better — or at least better looking," write Frank Gibney and Belinda Luscombe in "The Rebirth of Design" (*Time*, March 20) as they discuss today's "design



economy." Their basic argument: Function is settled; form is now up for grabs. Translating "design" t mean "look," they report that America has risen from its computer-as-beige-box trance; innovative design is again making waves. And significantly, good design — or good looks — is accessibl to all. Products cross class and genre — Michael Graves i knocking off his own teapot for Target. From streamline Sears Coldspot "iceboxes" in the Depression to anti-box iMacs today, they argue that eye-catching design sets products apart in any economy. Selling, of course, is the bottom line.

Designer genes... *Limn's* "Issue 5" tackles the question of genetics, asking Christopher Alexander, "Should We Live by Design?" Alexander is puzzled — and horrified. His response is simple: Genetic design, as proposed, is manipulative; it is only about image and not about life. The discussion includes Natalie Jeremijenko's (of MASS MoCA upside-down-trees fame) proposal to take "a gene from an octopus that codes for fluorescent green skin and insert it into humans." Alexander argues that we must first understand how we live and, most importantly, we must ask how our actions contribute to the good of the whole. Designer-green skin for all? Maybe not.

Hey — where is everybody?... "The town square in Russellville looks a lot like its counterparts all over Kentucky," writes Alan Ehrenhalt in March/April's *Preservation*, "except that it's prettier than most...You can sit comfortably on one of those benches at any time, and the odds are overwhelming that you can do so in utter privacy; the place is empty in the morning, empty a noon, empty at dusk." And that's far from the way it's always been. Another writer wailing about the loss of civi life? Not quite. This article is worth considering for what it's not. It doesn't claim that building a new neotradition town square will build a new civic society — Russellville already has the real McCoy. It doesn't claim that a once-great building stock has been destroyed or vacated — the historic downtown buildings are fully occupied and are in fabulous condition. It doesn't claim that the new econom has passed this place over — economically, the town is doing well. "Have the residents found a substitute for the reassuring human interactions of the town square? Or have they learned to get along without them?" These questions lie at that complex intersection of architecture, urban design, sociology, and real-life observation. ■■■

Gretchen Schneider teaches architecture at Smith College.

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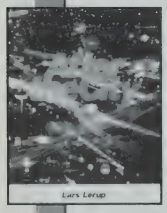
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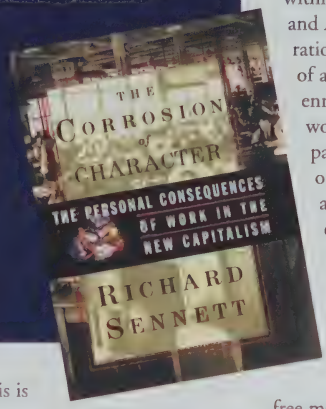
ooks:

he Corrosion of Character:

he Personal Consequences Work in the New Capitalism

y Richard Sennett
.W. Norton & Company, 1998

eviewed by Hubert Murray AIA



aracter is critical — in case you have ssed the message in this election season. hile candidates are portrayed in the dia as personalities — the earnest but ring, the straight-talker, the establish- nt scion — the question of character proved more elusive. Personality is ociated with liveliness, celebrity, a son to be watched; character with ability, trustworthiness, a person to be ened to. Personality connotes qualities erent to an individual; character etermined by that person's moral nection to the world.

The Corrosion of Character, Richard nett takes on the prevailing cultural os of the post-industrial economy and mines the effect of the evolving ible, high-risk, time-and-place-neutral nomy on our private and social lives. membering that even in the fifth century , Heraclitus observed that "all is flux," re is nonetheless a feeling of breathless gency in the changes that now confront two-and-a-half millennia later.

e changes wrought by the new global italism are nowhere more evident than he workplace itself, continuously efined by a bewildering array of logisms: "re-engineering the corpora- n," "downsizing," "outsourcing," and xible specialization." This is a changing nomy in which the old values of tarchy, routine, career, and loyalty are erseded by the new: teamwork, flexi- ty, risk, and opportunism. The heady of cybernetics and the free market has quered the globe for capitalism.

Sennett's thesis is that while the new economy has shown itself to be dynamic, delivering more goods at less cost than ever before in the history of humanity, there are nevertheless some costs. He asks, "How do we decide what is of lasting value in ourselves in a society which is impatient, which focuses on the immediate moment? How can long-term goals be pursued in an economy devoted to the short-term? How can mutual loyalties and commitments be sustained in institutions which are constantly breaking apart or continually being redesigned?"

Ignoring the broader socio-economic consequences of this new world order, Sennett examines the effects of the prevailing ethos on those who are pretty much on the fortunate end of the stick: white, middle-class Americans. There is Rico, the downsized technology consultant and his wife Jeanette, a corporate accountant — "the very acme of an adaptable, mutually supportive couple"; there is Rosie the barmaid-turned-advertising-executive. We meet workers in a Boston bakery and, later, some downsized IBM executives collaboratively discussing their fates and futures in Westchester County. In each of these encounters is an examination of character, that extension of personality from the self to the world. Sennett winnows out his subjects' observations on their sense of sustained purpose; their sense of integrity; their sense of trust and commitment to people, things, and ideals beyond the self.

These contemporary observations are set within a discussion framed by Diderot and Adam Smith. Diderot, the rationalist, sees that the orderly routine of a modern factory can have an ennobling and democratizing effect on workers, liberating them from feudal paternalism. Adam Smith, on the other hand, sees the division of labor and the routine of repetitive tasks as essential to economic progress but deadening to the human mind. Between the historic dialogue and the contemporary condition, Sennett leads us to the conclusion that the only antidote to the moral isolation of free agents in a free market lies in the "dangerous pronoun"[1] — the first-person plural: "We." The best hope for combating detachment, uncertainty, and moral reductionism lies in collaboration — of the sort practiced by the former IBM executives struggling collectively to understand their place in the world as a prelude to action.

Sennett is one of the best sociologists writing today, particularly for architects. He has written extensively on the theory of the city and, while this volume does not directly address architecture or urban form, I challenge any designer not to appreciate the meaning of this discussion in terms of how we work, for whom, and to what end.

His conclusion, however, is a weak ending to an important and accessible book. Karl Marx, addressing the same issues more than 150 years ago, wrote of the revolutionary effects of the bourgeois epoch: "All fixed, fast-frozen relations…are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind." Between world revolution and focus groups in Westchester County, there has to be a third way. ■■■

Hubert Murray AIA runs his own practice in Cambridge, MA, concentrating on planning and design for urban centers, schools, and housing.

The Time Bind: When Work Becomes Home and Home Becomes Work

By Arlie Russell Hochschild

Henry Holt, 1997
(paperback, Owl Books, 1998)

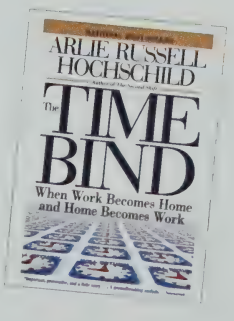
Reviewed by
Cynthia Griffin

With *The Time Bind*, Arlie Hochschild delivers a shocking wake-up call to the American work culture that espouses family values and yet subversively eats away at their sustenance. Through her focus on one Fortune 500 business she dubs "Amerco," Hochschild delivers the news: Work has competed with the family, and work has won. The workplace invests in its employees — training and empowering them, recognizing their efforts and accomplishments — and in turn wins their allegiance in time. Meanwhile at home, the same people are met with isolation, faint support, and little, if any, recognition for their domestic contributions.

Like Amerco, many "family friendly" businesses have policies for family support, but few workers take advantage of them. In competition with these policies is the goal of "real player" status, which is associated with the number of work hours clocked each week. The more the company invests in parents, the more attached parents become to the world of work, and subsequently the more its schedule of deadlines and work-cycles shapes family time and rhythm. A compulsive need for efficiency, even if unintended, drives family life, and it affects all members. The greatest problem facing children today is stress. They are put on an assembly line of childcare or home-alone time, with little family down-time. This time deficit has been linked to alarming trends in child development. Today, more young people are likely to be troubled with poor school performance, eating disorders, attempted suicides, drugs, and violent crimes.

While stress in families is on the rise, so too is overtime. Parents often choose to spend more hours on the job because work is orderly, reinforcing, and validating. Parents must then return home to, in effect, a second work shift of caring for children and family members, and then a third shift of sorting through the emotional fall-out of handling the stress. As a way to cope, they often choose yet more overtime.

Most workers will admit to struggling with "time bind," but most evade the issue by redefining what they think family members need; outsourcing pieces of family life by buying goods and services; or developing a "postponed potential" view of themselves ("if only I had the time"). In order to make a change, we must take a serious look at the realities of a speeded-up culture. *The Time Bind* lays out the challenges in a vivid way and offers a few suggestions at the end. Families must create for themselves "a vision of what life could be…with the notion that something potential could become real." Perhaps Hochschild's next book will pick up on the concluding theme of this one. ■■■



Cynthia Griffin is the co-founder and co-director of The Family Network, Inc., a non-profit organization offering support, education and resources for parents, childcare providers, and teachers north of Boston.

Work & Family: Essays from the "Work and Family" Column of *The Wall Street Journal*

by Sue Shellenbarger

Ballantine Books, 1999

Reviewed by
Amy Bernhardt, Assoc. AIA

Six years ago, from the relatively safe vantage point of a secure and rewarding job, I began talking with my current employer about the possibility of joining his firm. Nearly everything about the opportunity looked terrific. *Nearly* everything. The responsibilities of the position I would fill were enormous and, if left unchanged, would threaten my personal commitment to create a better balance between my work and my "other" lives. So, in a move unprecedented for both the new firm and for me, I negotiated a pared-down version of the position and a three-day workweek. Bravo, right? Not quite. I determined that the way to set the right course would be to start with a full-time commitment for six months, and then scale back when the machine was humming. That was six years ago, and — you guessed it — I have never worked less than a 50-hour week, and frequently more.

This book was written for me.

I bet it was written for you, too. In fact, it is a must-read for anyone wants to have a life.

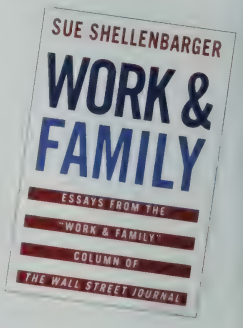
Since her creation of *The Wall Street Journal*'s "Work & Family" column in 1991, Sue Shellenbarger has been sharing wit, wisdom, insight, and guidance in response to what has been called the most important social issue of our day: balancing career and personal life. A parent familiar with the conflicting demands of a fast-paced career and home life, she provides a commonsense look at our hectic lives. In this collection of 100 columns, Shellenbarger observes that societal values are changing, as many American workers are turning inward and homeward find new meaning.

With a compelling combinatic of objective data and personal experience, she offers perspecti on the challenges posed by the expanding workday; technolog growth; changing gender roles burn-out; marital stress; and competing responsibilities including childcare and elderc Many of the essays include a bullet-point list of recommend tions for dealing effectively wi particular problem, and the book concludes with a first-rat resource list for further exploration of the issues.

Shellenbarger accomplishes he stated mission of helping individual readers align the reality of their daily lives with their most cherished personal values and responsibilities. She offers no quick formula fo success in the struggle for balance. Instead, she offers a range of stories and anecdotes that illustrate that success comes from a crystal-clear und standing of personal values an a commitment to make decisio with those values as guides.

Shellenbarger pulls no punche and does not spare us the grav of the circumstances in which find ourselves. Yet, with ample amounts of humor and optimi she does offer comfort and kinship in the knowledge that these struggles are shared — and can even be won. ■■■

Amy Bernhardt is a principal and the director of marketing at Bergmeyer Associates, Inc. in Bostor



oven Together
York County, Maine:
History 1865-1990

Madge Baker

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apleigh, Maine) 1999

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thia Howard AIA

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landscapes and wants a
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0: farming, textile
nufacturing, and tourism.

s is a scholarly work, with
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migrations. But by telling the
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letters, maps, newspaper
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a good read, compelling in
manner of a novel, about the
mate lives of our ancestors.

e first part documents the life
Gilman Lougee — working
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onsfield — and then follows
family through times of
cultural prosperity and
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recent return of Gilman's
endants to preserve the
dings, stonewalls, and
lscape. Today, farming has
ually disappeared from
onsfield.



The second story begins with Thomas Goodall's move to Sanford in 1867 to establish a woolen mill and traces the simultaneous growth of the family business and the community until the closing of the mill in 1954, which left a town struggling to rebuild its manufacturing economy. The third story follows the Goodalls to Kennebunkport, where in the 1870s they were first of the many summer visitors to come, radically changing the economic base, work, and demographics of this and other Maine coastal towns. Traditional ways of life based on fishing, farming, and textile manufacturing are largely gone today, replaced by businesses catering to suburban development and the tourist industry.

Baker presents Maine working people who succeeded by adapting to and seeing opportunity in change. Loss is a significant theme of the history she documents, as is the speed with which major changes washed over the landscape. It is all especially instructive for those of us who tend towards nostalgic ideas of what life used to be.

Baker quotes John Lincoln Wright, a songwriter who grew up in Sanford, who observes: "No, you can't go home again, but we should protect ourselves against the convenience of short memories." A pleasure to read, *Woven Together in York County, Maine*, makes a major contribution to our more informed memories. ■■■

Cynthia Howard AIA, an architect and preservation planner, is president-elect of AIA Maine. An emigrée from Cambridge 20 years ago to Fortunes Rocks, Maine (a part of Biddeford), she has worked in Maine's coastal communities, farmlands, and mill towns.

Editor's note: *Woven Together* is available from the BSA (617 951 1433 x 221).

Work, Life, Tools: The Things We Use to Do the Things We Do

Edited by Milton Glaser
Essay by Stanley Abercrombie

Monacelli Press, 1997

Reviewed by
James McCown



A sign in my neighborhood Au Bon Pain reads: "Whatever I am, I owe to bread. Signed, Butter." To what inanimate object do you owe your success?

In this spirit comes *Work, Life, Tools: The Things We Use to Do the Things We Do*. The book is based on an exhibition created by Milton Glaser, the graphic design guru, and features 50 people of varying careers and background, describing the one object they find the most useful in their work lives. In his trademark punchy-but-elegant graphics, Glaser allots each subject four pages, including a portrait shot and a close-up photo of each tool. It's all deceptively simple — so Richard Meier chooses a plain drafting pencil as his *objet indispensable*. But that's just the idea — we're invited to look beyond the obvious to the timeless nature of the implement, its tactile qualities, and why he finds it so useful. Objects as varied as Kleenex tissues and pipe threaders are contemplated and examined.

Stanley Abercrombie's introductory essay on life and work is excellent, but he's a little too unquestioning of the way-cool, job-hopping, dot-com, 20-something he holds up as the new model. What about the gradual disappearance of loyalty and business etiquette built up over centuries? And what about the darker side of certain tools? For example, architects in particular need to consider how cell phones are changing the interactive nature of urban space — not for the better.

With all due respect to our vaunted craft, designers and other "creatives" are over-represented in this book. Here Glaser may be guilty of what I would call the Michael Ovitz Syndrome, the mistaken presumption that the entire world is endlessly fascinated with the inner workings of one's particular industry. It's hard to escape the notion that in recruiting subjects, Glaser simply flipped through his Rolodex and signed on a few dozen of his nearest and dearest. It would be infinitely more interesting to hear from a master woodworker about the tools of his ancient trade than from Francis Ford Coppola about his portable PC.

Ah, the ubiquitous PC. Here the authors wrestle. There are predictable bromides about the five or so computers featured, but little that's enlightening. In his essay, Abercrombie pleads with designers to "...take this object, with which we spend an increasingly large amount of time, and make it look good." Where has he been shopping? Hasn't he seen the new iMacs or the uncounted sleek, "designy" desktops out there? Today's computer makers, like the Detroit carmakers of the '50s, are reacting to the brutally competitive market by emphasizing packaging.

This minor carping aside, this book is a delightful peek into people's daily work lives. God may or may not be in the details, but as *Work, Life, Tools* shows, he is certainly eminently represented in the essential objects we use every day. ■■■

James McCown is director of communications at Moshe Safdie and Associates Architects in Somerville, MA.

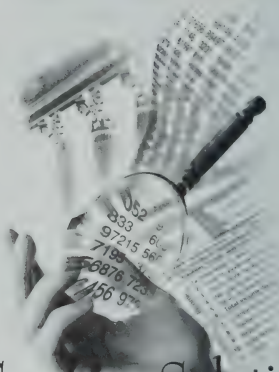
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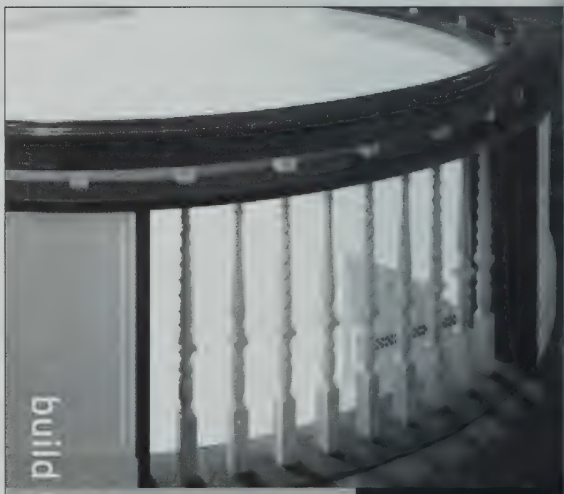


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An Eclectic List of Events in US Labor History

www.hempwine.com/alleycat/labor.html

Did you know that Boston carpenters staged the first strike for the 10-hour work day in 1825? This "eclectic list" is a chilling reminder of the bloodshed that has marked the US labor movement.

The Dismal Scientist

www.dismal.com

"The best free lunch on the Web." Well, maybe, if you love chowing down on statistics. But it's hard to doubt the claim to be the "pre-eminent source of free economic research and information." Includes links to economic forecasts, trends, and data — including comparative metropolitan regional statistics.

Labor and Employment Statistical Resources on the Web

www.lib.umich.edu/libhome/Documents.center/steclab.html

An annotated compendium of links. Takes the work out of researching work.

Baltimore Museum of Industry

www.charm.net/~bmi

A museum about work? The BMI offers a fascinating view of Baltimore's history through the history of its business and industry. Maybe Boston should have one of these. We could call it the "BMI."

Wind Shelters

www.wf.net/~hparch/download.htm

A little work now can prevent tragedy later. Charles Harper FAIA, one of the nation's leading experts on disaster recovery, offers free downloads of plans for tornado- and hurricane-proof shelters.

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Other Voices by Macauley Lord

The Fly-Casting Pond at L.L. Bean

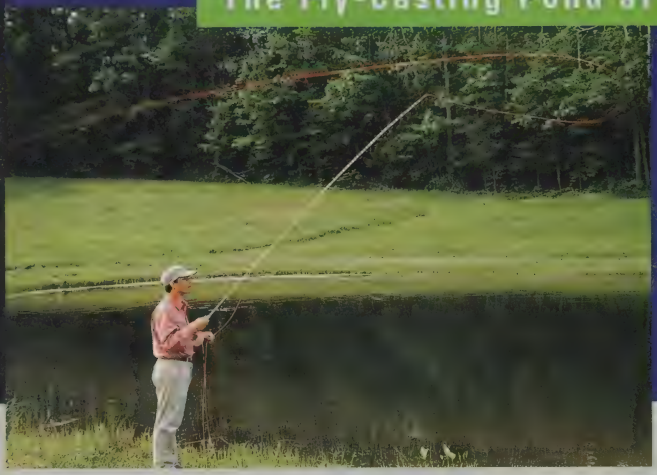


Photo: Jim Rowinski

On their first day at fly-fishing school, I walk my students out to the casting pond in Freeport at a June-afternoon-in-Maine pace. We cross a rolling, clovery expanse of field, away from the old farmhouse on the edge of town that is now our classroom. They are spending the afternoon learning their knots and casting a fly onto the pond's sleepy water, practicing hopefully for a leisurely life of fishing. As we stroll, Joe, an affable beginner from Georgia, asks me, "How much did you have to pay to get this job?" He is at play; I am at work; together we laugh and celebrate our good fortune.

I have walked with my students and fellow instructors for 14 years across this former sheep pasture to and from our little pond, hidden low in some soft hillocks. It is only a 300-yard walk, but in that space we move away from the noise of the sprawling town and into a brighter, somehow larger world — the world of fishing to come. We become oblivious to all beyond it.

The pond, less than an acre, is surrounded by a ring of mowed field carved out of the woods. The mowing is a humane gesture: the students will catch enough tall grass and trees after they leave us. Red-ear sunfish, yellow perch, and largemouth bass swim at our feet. Juvenile pickerel, narrow fellows in the aquatic grass, wait in ambush for the little sunfish. Huge dragonflies buzz around, hunting midges. A bass waits calmly in the warm shallows to make one good lunge at a fleeting dragon. When he does, our students are startled out of their casting reverie and watch as the dragonfly zooms away, the bass laments his lost chance at a flying cheeseburger, and the ripples roll out and fade.

On this warm summer afternoon, the 12 men and women in Joe's class are spread out around the pond, casting their bright yellow fly lines as the three instructors walk from one student to another. Here, we offer encouragement; there, we demonstrate a roll-cast. The students do their best to mirror what we've shown them. Some of their casts are listless; some look like lightening bolts. To our unending satisfaction, most are graceful ephemera, delivering the little fluff of a fly gently to the water's surface.

Our craft is technical yet deeply personal, like mechanical engineering for poets. We search for exactly the right words or movements to teach each student to cast a graceful line into the fish's watery universe. After all these years of teaching, my most valuable tool is intuition, and I call upon it now. I walk up to a woman whose casts are falling short, their energy diffused. I know what's wrong with her cast, what she must do to fix it, and perhaps 17 different wa to get her to do it. Which one will reach her right now? Maybe she needs to hear the right words — "Try flinging the tip off the rod." It doesn't work for her. Ma she needs to see some good casts, so I make a few, focusing her attention on th way the rod accelerates to a precise stop. That doesn't work either.

Our world has now become very small - it's just the two of us, and a fly rod. She concentrates, maybe too hard. This is m fault, not hers. I borrow the rod for a w and change the subject. "So, where are y going to fish?" She talks some, looks up into the trees beyond the field, and relax Handing back the rod, I say, "Try castin with your eyes closed." She hesitantly closes her eyes and then makes as pretty cast as I have ever seen over this water. A that instant something inexplicable happens. The sky opens up and rays of heaven stream down on us and we swim them. For just a few seconds, on the edg of a solitary pond in Maine, we are in a state of grace. She knows now that she c do this, that she may have the joy of fly fishing for her whole life. I know that I have given her a gift — I have taught he to cast a fly.

On Sunday afternoon, after Joe graduate from fly-fishing school, he walks up to m with a smile and says, "You never did answer my question." ■■■

Macauley Lord is head instructor of the L.L. Bean Fly-Fishing Schools, author of the *L.L. Bean Fly-Castin Handbook* (The Lyons Press), and the fly-casting colun for *American Angler* magazine. He trains and certifies fly-casting instructors for the Federation of Fly Fishers is editor of *The Loop*, the journal of casting instruction

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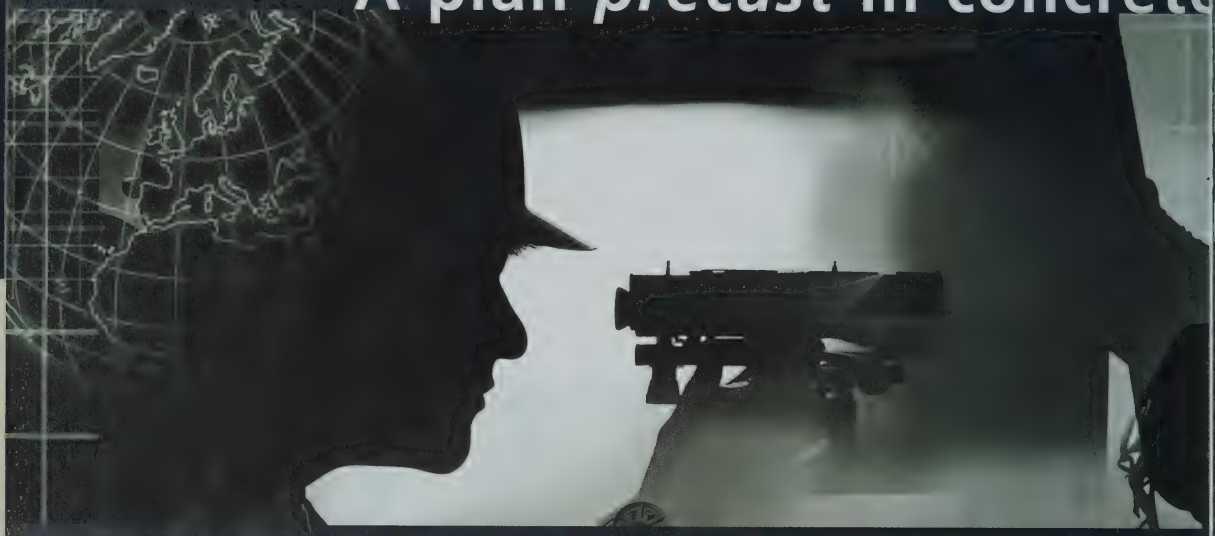
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Society

"F2F." In our gotta-run society where no one has time to talk, we are becoming accustomed to code-speak: 24/7. B2B. MP3. F2F. Small wonder that a popular joke on the Internet concerns a monastery where the monks know each other's old jokes so well that they have only to call out a number to have everyone dissolve in laughter.

Increasing numbers of people lead increasingly isolated electronic lives hawking goods and services from one business to another business (B2B), working around the clock seemingly 24 hours a day and seven days a week (24/7), taking breaks listening to downloaded digital music files (MP3) — all the while craving a little face-to-face human contact: F2F.

The irony of today's code-speak, of course, is that it thrives on isolation — after all, what's the point of a code if everyone understands it? Just as fluency in French once connoted worldly sophistication, fluency in code-speak suggests an ease with the wired economy in which it's cool to be overworked and isolated from family and friends. We are indeed seeing the "revenge of the nerds" — those who were once barred from the neighborhood kiddie clubhouse have now constructed a world of nearly inscrutable passwords and secret handshakes. But sometimes being on the inside is no more fun than being on the outside.

As happens frequently in the pages of *ArchitectureBoston*, a subtext runs through many of the stories in this issue, reflecting trends in the world around us. Isolation, it seems, is of increasing concern to many of us, eroding civic (and civil) behavior, threatening both health and happiness — even as we create environments that separate us further: The upscale condos of Boston's Harbor Towers and the working-class rowhouses of South Boston are only minor variations on the gated-community theme; outsiders know they are not welcome in these places. As contributor John Stilgoe notes, we've lost "serendipity" in our lives, the fortuitous meeting of strangers on common ground. The creation of new common ground — space that belongs equally to all of us — is the goal of many Bostonians. But sharing turf is never easy in this town. And so we argue about the development of the Fan Pier and the need for more urban parks.

Robert Putnam, author of *Bowling Alone*, an account of the loss of community in America, has commented that we do not yet know if the Internet will promote even greater passive isolation — like the television — or serve as a tool for greater connection and communication — like the telephone. But his message that social disaffection is accelerating has found a responsive audience. Perhaps the built world can help counter the isolation of the electronic world, fostering sociability. A lot of people would welcome a little more F2F in their daily lives. U2?

Elizabeth S. Padjen FAIA
Editor

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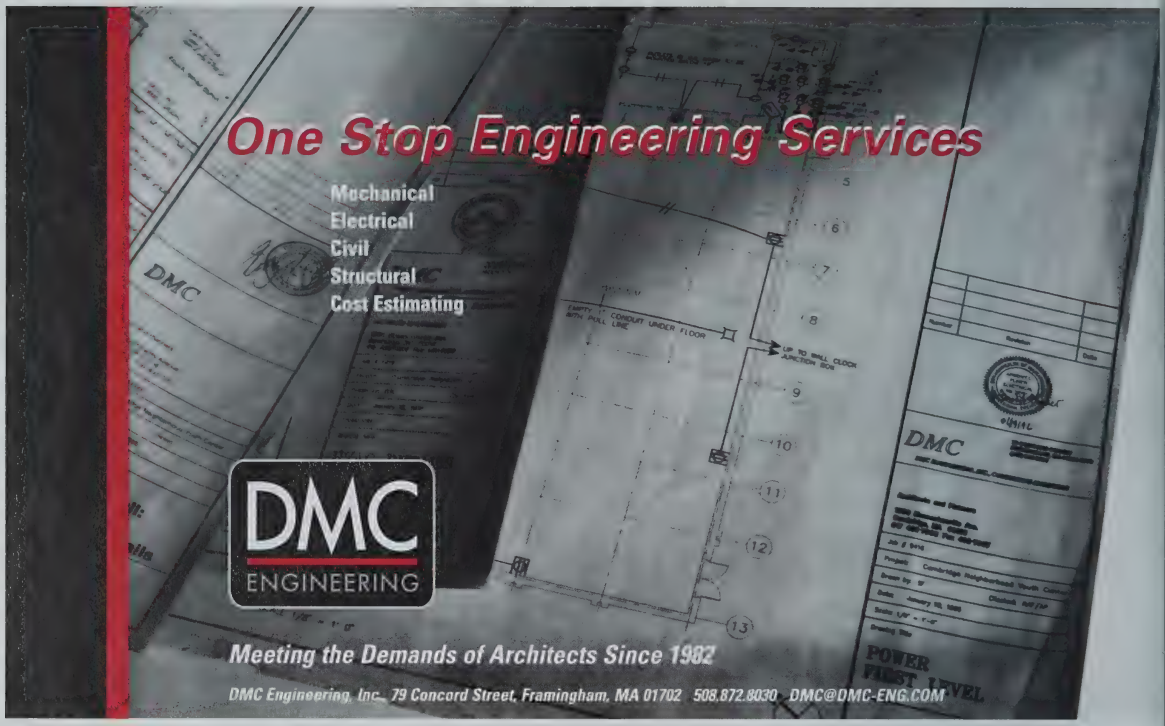
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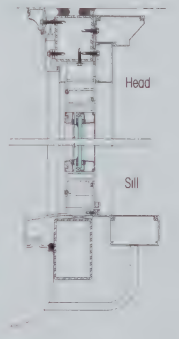


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Letters

In "Remember This: Memorial Mania in America" (Spring 2000), Deborah Dietsch offers the FDR memorial as a perfect example of how special-interest groups can "put a permanent spin on history," adding that "Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt are filtered through the lens of current political correctness."

I disagree that adding a statue of FDR in his wheelchair at the entrance to the memorial is spinning history or bowing to political pressures. Does the author know why FDR "never wanted the American public to see him in the chair"? Perhaps he wasn't ashamed of his disability; perhaps he knew it would have been political suicide at that time. Fortunately, we now educate, hire, elect, and (wow!) even marry people with disabilities. We know that FDR visited people with disabilities in his wheelchair. Roosevelt family members have said that he would want this statue at this time. Now, FDR's wheelchair can be portrayed simply as his means of moving around. It will be a source of inspiration to children who use wheelchairs. It will add to, rather than alter, the knowledge and understanding of FDR's legend.

Ann Keech
Devon, PA

Jeffrey Stein's history of the Harleston Parker Medal (Spring 2000) recalled 1963 and the minor uproar that attended the nomination of Le Corbusier's Carpenter Visual Arts Center by the Parker Medal Committee, which I chaired that year.

Our committee's choice was put to the usual vote of the BSA membership at its annual meeting. We had put together a panel of photographs documenting our selection and in the convivial "social hour" beforehand assumed a *pro forma* vote for our nominee. But as members passed the exhibit on the way into dinner, I began to suspect we were in trouble — there was much muttering and banter aimed at the display. When the vote came after dinner, our recommendation was soundly defeated — as far as I know, a first in the history of the Medal. The next morning the local papers and then the national press picked up the story, playing up the "banned in Boston" angle.

One can speculate on why 1963 was unique Perhaps the composition of the membership had something to do with it, split as it was between an Old Guard and a younger generation coming along which had been ra on Corbu, Mies, and Gropius. Today, the Carpenter might have trouble passing a "contextual" test — Josep Lluis Sert, so the story goes, once likened the Carpenter, flank by the neo-Georgian Fogg Museum and Fac Club, to a voluptuous dancer between two sober policemen.

In any event, we were vindicated the followi year when a new committee nominated the Carpenter again and got it approved.

Walter S. Pierce FAIA, Emeritus
Lexington, MA

It seems to me that much of the thinking reflected in your articles, "Taking Care of Business" and "Real or Imagined? Measuring Success in the New Office" (Summer 2000), misses the point by trying to simplify the process and/or the phenomena. This gives ri to what I found to be conflicting and contradictory statements and "facts."

I have a very simple measure for judging the success or failure of offices I have designed: If the people working in the space I designec continue to greet me in the morning when I visit, I know I have been successful.

Beginning with research that I (and Mike Br among others) was involved with in 1967 concerning performance specifications for federal office buildings, through a series of offices designed 30 years later, I have yet to s hear, or find any more accurate measure of user satisfaction. And it makes sense. Peop generally let you know — somehow — that they are either pleased or displeased with you

But just as this response is very difficult to quantify, and reflects complex social signals a organizations, identifying the reasons for the response is equally hard to define simply.

Life is messy. Design is messy. The designer c only design what is known. Our job is to ma sure, as best we can, that we "know" everythi that we can know about the project we are undertaking. To paraphrase the great Frank Lloyd Wright: Take care of the known, and t unknown will take care of itself.

Charles Boxenbaum AIA
New York City

LIKE THE STUDENTS profiled in Wellington Reiter's ughtful article (Summer 2000) about recent hitecture graduates eschewing conventional practice newly-defined roles in the world of information hnology [IT], I haven't been a recent graduate since 36. After 14 years in conventional practice, however, oo, recently chose a new career path in the digital nomy, in this case with Revit Technology, an startup developing software tools for architects.

e fact that a significant percentage of architecture duates today readily moves away from a practice-based eer demonstrates that something profound has nged in the culture of our young professionals. An hitecture graduate in the mid-'80s who didn't go into ctice (or, more gloriously yet, into teaching) was not y an anomaly but viewed as somehow "lapsed." More n a decade later, I still had to confront the remnants of s sentiment in myself as I considered alternative career ices; a sympathetic friend of mine compared it to the chological task of leaving a cult. I offer the following observations from my own experience to extend Reiter's discussion.

st, to say that I felt that the world was somehow ving on without me, even as I rose through positions ncreasing responsibility and autonomy in the fession, would be stating the condition too strongly; there was certainly some of that. Architecture didn't m to be making the kind of difference in the world t I had always hoped it would. The percentage of our ion's GNP devoted to building has declined steadily r the last half of this century; our culture increasingly ks elsewhere for what architecture used to provide. e built environment is now a modest subset of the erienced environment. Automobiles and airplanes, vies and television, and the screens of computer nitors are supplanting the products of architecture.

ond, technologically adept intern architects who do er practice find their working days largely consumed exercising the awkward software tools presently ise in the profession. As entry-level employees, with npensation and status to match, they are in fact cticing technology skills at a level of mastery ommon in the senior ranks of the firm. They are cut from opportunities to broaden their experience in itectural practice because they are utterly indispens- in these roles; and their sense of accomplishment xercising these difficult tools creates a reciprocal patience with the hard work of learning their nded craft.

president of a prominent Boston design firm, couraged by the affliction computer tools had become he culture of his firm, commented to me a few years , "If you didn't know what we did, but just walked und our office listening to what people were talking ut, you would think that we were a software firm, not architectural practice." Small wonder, then, that recent duates choose to practice their information technology ls in an environment where they are more closely ned with the purpose of the business. If I am going to e to be an expert in IT simply to practice architecture, ay as well practice IT!

hard L. Rundell AIA
ington, MA

KUDOS to *ArchitectureBoston* for focusing the Summer 2000 issue on the design of the workplace. Early in the 20th century, architects such as Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright concerned themselves with understanding office design. Perimeter offices supported by an open landscape of individual desks with typewriters gave rise to many *Fortune* 500 companies. But as Elizabeth Padjen points out in her introduction to the issue, we've entered the 21st century, and the "new workplace offers an enormous opportunity to the design community."

There has been a great deal of research investigating the questions of the new workplace. A 1994 survey by Richard Ellis for the Harris Research Centre found that 96 percent of workers believe that the physical conditions of their workplace affect their productivity. When asked in an open-ended question to identify specific aspects of their environment that affected them most, 43 percent (the largest percentage) mentioned criteria relating to space planning and visual design factors.

Research published this year by John Doggart supports the notion that well-designed workplaces can dramatically improve the morale of an organization's workers and the bottom line, saving 3 percent to 15 percent per person per year. He lists a number of factors related to design which affect individual well-being and productivity — findings that concur with many of the points raised in the lively discussion recorded in "Taking Care of Business."

Also noteworthy is Jacqueline Vischer's reference to Michael Brill's notion that "the new concept of workspace is less related to physical innovations...than to the *process* of new space design." *ArchitectureBoston*'s attention to this subject is a great introduction to a growing area of interest. Thanks for presenting such a wide range of voices on the subject.

Sally Levine AIA, IIDA
Director, Interior Design
Boston Architectural Center

We want to hear from you. Letters may be e-mailed to: epadjen@architects.org or sent to: *ArchitectureBoston*, 52 Broad Street, Boston MA 02109.

Letters may be edited for clarity and length and must include your name, address, and daytime telephone number. Length should not exceed 300 words.

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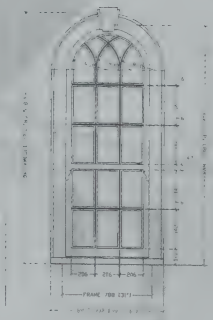
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BBRS will be offering FREE SEMINARS on the new Energy Code. The following schedule is for ENVELOPE seminars. (Sessions on Lighting and on HVAC requirements will also be offered.) Registration is required at least one week in advance. AIA members will receive CES Learning Units through the Boston Society of Architects. Please register by e-mail at www.state.ma.us/bbrs/register.htm or call 617-951-1433 x323. AM sessions run from 8:30 to 12:00, PM sessions from 1:00 to 4:30. Directions will be sent with confirmation.

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Peabody	3/9/00	8:30 AM
Swansea	3/15/00	1:00 PM
West Bridgewater	3/29/00	8:30 AM
Cambridge	4/6/00	1:00 PM
Northborough	4/18/00	8:30 AM
Northampton	4/26/00	1:00 PM
Andover	5/10/00	8:30 AM
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Wareham	6/1/00	8:30 AM
Northborough	6/7/00	1:00 PM
Pittsfield	6/21/00	8:30 AM
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Needham	8/16/00	8:30 AM
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Forensic Examination

The pathology of Boston's seaport district

Controversy is inevitable in the development of a 1,000-acre waterfront site. But many observers have interpreted the ongoing conflicts over the future of Boston's seaport district as evidence of a chronic malaise — if not paralysis — that affects development all over the city. *ArchitectureBoston* recently invited a group of community leaders and urban designers to participate in a forensic examination, to try to identify some of the underlying pathologies that have precipitated this condition.



PARTICIPANTS

Mary Cooney is a community activist in South Boston where she focuses on environmental issues. A trustee of the Boston Harbor Association, she has also lived in the Fort Point Channel neighborhood.

David Dixon FAIA is an urban designer and director of planning at Goody, Clancy & Associates. He is a resident of Boston's South End.

Gary Hack is dean of the Graduate School of Fine Arts at the University of Pennsylvania. An urban designer, he was previously a professor in the department of urban studies and planning at MIT.

Ann Hershfang is president of *Walk*Boston, a pedestrian advocacy organization. A resident of the South End, she is a former board member of the Massachusetts Port Authority and the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority, and is a former Massachusetts undersecretary of transportation.

Steve Hollinger, an inventor, lives and works in Boston's Fort Point Channel neighborhood. He is a founding member of the Seaport Alliance for Neighborhood Design (SAND).

Tom Keane is a general partner in Murphy & Partners, a venture capital firm, and is a columnist for the *Boston Herald*. A resident of Back Bay, he was a city councilor from 1994 to 1999.

Ted Landsmark is president of the Boston Architectural Center. A resident of Boston's Jamaica Plain neighborhood, he once lived in the Fort Point Channel area.

Elizabeth Padjen FAIA is editor of *ArchitectureBoston*.

zabeth Padjen: The seaport story changes on aily basis, and yet there are issues that have aracterized the saga from the beginning and will luence the eventual outcome. Let's start by ntifying some of the sources of conflict in trict over the last few years.

ve Hollinger: Many of the conflicts are ween the short-term needs of a range of stake-lders and the long-term view of what could pen 50 years from now. There is tension ween what needs should be addressed now and at needs could be addressed in the decades to ne.

vid Dixon: I'd add that the differences ween the myths and realities of a lot of proposed s have not been explained well. But I also think that the political history of this project and early decisions about framing a political process for it have really come back to haunt everyone.

Gary Hack: The words I'd use for it are "symbolic politics" — politics that operates on a level of symbolizing what's going on, rather than dealing with the reality of what's going on.

Ann Hershfang: Dealing with change is one of he big issues. There's going to be a change here, d how the South Boston and Fort Point annel neighborhoods deal with the idea of nge is of significant concern.

Landsmark: Two things occur to me. First, the look and feel of this new community be minated by the politics of the 20th century or the ically changed demographics and cultural shifts he city that represent Boston in the 21st tury? And the second issue is whether public or vate interests will ultimately determine the dity of life in the community. It's not at all clear t the public interest is being articulated in the nning process.

n Keane: I would like to add to that first nt. We are seeing a conflict between two visions Boston: one is the last century's vision of Boston collection of neighborhoods — oftentimes ring or competing neighborhoods — and the er is this century's vision of Boston as "one ston." The controversy over a seemingly slight e like changing the name of this district from e Seaport" to "the South Boston Waterfront" is a fect example.

Mary Cooney: A lot of the conflict grows from the fact that no one can reconcile the current proposals with what we've been told are the planning principles. The "Fan Pier Planning Principles" and the "Public Realm Plan" seem to call for one thing, such as lively, authentic neighborhoods, but then we're shown something very different — like three million square feet of development and nine city blocks of condos, hotels, and office towers.

Elizabeth Padjen: Mary is the only one who spoke directly to design issues. Perhaps that suggests the limitations of the design professions — that design is only a small piece of city building. I'm fascinated with the possibility that these controversies are symptomatic of a specific moment in time, when Boston lies on the cusp between its past and future identities. Tom described 20th-century Boston as a collection of neighborhoods — which is very nearly a sacred concept in planning circles here. But then he described the Boston of the 21st century as one unified city. Is that really true?

Tom Keane: I think that it is a change that is already occurring. I don't mean in terms of residential sub-districts that divide the geography of the city. I mean the erosion of certain characteristics that give those sub-districts their insularity and their identity — the North End as all Italian, Roxbury as all black, Charlestown as all Irish-American. Those definitions are all starting to break down. It's even happening to South Boston, historically the most isolated of all the neighborhoods. And as each of those neighborhoods becomes more diverse, Boston will start to see itself less as a series of warring neighborhoods and more as one city.

Mary Cooney: The city is only as vital as its neighborhoods. I would hope that we will still have a sense of neighborhood. Why has South Boston become an area that everyone wants to go to? Because it's safe. Because families are out there. Because our elders are taken care of. I hope that those are the qualities that will make it into the next century.

David Dixon: I have a darker view. There is certainly change in the diversity and ethnicity of the neighborhoods, but I think the more significant change is in relative wealth. The neighborhoods are either becoming much wealthier or they're staying poor. In other words, the city is reflecting what's happening nationally, but in a much more intensive way, partly because we don't have a school system that will attract middle-class people.

The political history of this project and early decisions about framing a political process for it have really come back to haunt everyone.

David Dixon FAIA

Gary Hack: I'm going to make a different distinction. I think that the divide occurs not between rich and poor, but along what Herbert Gans labeled the "cosmopolitan-local" split. That is to say, those people who take their definition of self from the community in which they live behave differently from those who have other ways of defining themselves, who happen to live in a community. The cosmopolitans — the latter category — are less attached to their neighborhood. What they want is the convenience of living close to where they work. They're upward-bound people in terms of rising incomes, and they'll be somewhere else in five years. Most of them don't have children in public schools, and therefore are not depending on the same level of services. Those people will form a different kind of community — something more like the Back Bay than the South End.

Tom Keane: That distinction also addresses the challenge for this new district. Can it become an extension of a more traditional residential area like South Boston? Or is it going to be a "cosmopolitan" residential area such as Gary just described? I think most people believe that is what will happen because of the high costs of development.

In Boston, we've created a system by which we prescribe an impossibly small height and an impossibly small square footage and then dare developers to propose what they'd really like to build on the site....It's not a particularly good way to form public policy.

Gary Hack

Steve Hollinger: I think it should be both. If this area is to have a character that reflects anything about the city, you need a critical mass of people who feel that they're investing their lives there. People do not invest their lives in other people's property. This area will feel very artificial if it is owned by a few large companies. So housing is especially important. For reasons I don't completely understand, the people of South Boston haven't pushed housing. They feel all the housing will be high-end, and so far they're right. But why isn't there a move to get all sorts of housing into this area?

Tom Keane: At one point, the BRA envisioned more than 10,000 housing units, but that number was pushed down to approximately 4,000 units – largely by the South Boston political leadership.

David Dixon: Just pumping up the number of units isn't enough if you don't also design buildings that contribute to a sense of community. You can have 10,000 people living there in towers, all of which look like — as someone once described them – suburbs in the sky. Or you can have buildings that really touch the ground and give people a sense of belonging.

Elizabeth Padjen: It sounds like the basic formul is wrong, if we're down to 4,000 units. If so many smart people who spend a lot of time thinking ha about these things agree that this number is far to low and actually would work against what appear be the goals even of South Boston, why did that happen?

Steve Hollinger: There was political opposition but developers had a hand in it, too, because they typically don't want to develop housing – it's not nearly as profitable as hotels and offices, especially today's economy.

Gary Hack: The city is complicit in this, too — it has to do with the fact that if you want new development to support a lot of so-called public benefits, then you really want offices and hotels, which can generate more revenue. In Bosto we've created a system by which we prescribe an impossibly small height and an impossibly small square footage and then dare developers to propos what they'd really like to build on the site. And th we go into negotiations over what actually gets built. It's not a particularly good way to form publ policy. It's a system that was invented to pay for public benefits that the city couldn't otherwise afford. It seems to me that the current debate is th fallout of a public policy that's been around for th last 10 or 15 years.

David Dixon: I would venture to say that the downsizing of the housing program has been drive not by economics, but by politics. Given the extraordinary strength of the housing market right now, I suspect one could devise models where housing could pay for some pretty substantial pub benefits. But the number of housing units has bee cut because of concerns about the impact of that many residents on the demographics and characte of South Boston.

Mary Cooney: But the first plan on the table proposed only a small amount of housing. One of the issues was the cost of providing parking. Even so, public transportation is almost nonexistent in these plans. There are neighborhoods in Boston right now that have no way of connecting to this part of the city. If we truly want to connect this ar to the rest of the city, we have to make sure that people can access it. We've just started to organize a community to address these concerns. We've hea from the Washington Street Coalition — people along Washington Street from Jamaica Plain all th way to the South End haven't had transit since 198

e as a South Boston community need to make re that the waterfront is connected to the rest of e city in a system that is environmentally sound d that works.

n Hershfang: Washington Street is actually a od cautionary tale. There is going to be second-ss gussied-up bus service there rather than transit cause the communities along the line couldn't ree on the type of service. And the MBTA's [Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority] nners lacked the will and the skill to resolve the agreements and squabbling. The failure of llaboration is what doomed a good opportunity.

d Landsmark: I don't think there is a ception in most of the city that the political dership in South Boston is at all interested in tering into any kind of collaborative mode that uld nurture or support the kinds of public enities, including transportation, that you're erring to. In fact, the perception is that the litical leadership saw an opportunity to grab what ould for a fairly small number of people, and to vide benefits to what appeared to be a fairly all number of people, ostensibly with residential d business bases in South Boston.

on't think we would be having this conversation parcel of similar size became available anywhere e in the city. This site has special value for the city d for investors because of its proximity to the ter, to downtown, and to the airport. That ximity, as much as anything, has driven up the ue of this parcel. The economics of that have refore dictated that only commercial interests d the wealthy are likely to have the resources to able to invest in this community. Average stonians, including young people, students, and ng families, will not be evident in this ghborhood. Everything that's been proposed is igned to establish a kind of economic hierarchy t will make Bostonians from other neighbor-ods feel very uncomfortable about spending any ne here.

ry Cooney: Unless they're working there. If 1 provide jobs and you establish ways for people get there from the neighborhoods, they will feel nfortable. Just as people from the neighborhoods rk in the financial district and feel comfortable re.

Gary Hack: I think Ted's general point is right. There will be relatively few low-income people working in those buildings. But I'm not sure that it's true that there will be relatively few Boston residents. Financial-service businesses, for example, tend to employ a lot of young people, and they tend to live in the city.

Tom Keane: We're seeing a lot of demographic changes throughout Boston that will influence the waterfront. A lot of change relates to the fact that Boston is suddenly a safer city, and so we have young people and empty-nesters now moving here. Going back to the earlier point about the number of residential units that will be built, a mere 4,000 units will only be enough for the singles and empty-nesters — mostly people working in the financial-services industry. But 10,000 units would have such an impact on the total supply of units that we would have a much more diverse population.

Gary Hack: The number of housing units was one of the elements of the city's own "Public Realm Plan," which was published almost two years ago. That number has been cut. Putting aside the need to mitigate the impacts of this development on surrounding communities, how close are we to accomplishing the goals of the "Public Realm Plan?" Or are we agreeing to throw away the "Public Realm Plan" and move forward with other ideals?

David Dixon: I think the problem is that planning is only as good as the political will behind it, and the political will requires a strong consensus. We simply don't have that. We're going to repeat the basic demographics of Back Bay in this area unless we consciously manage that aspect of the development. The point is that we *can* manage these things, but often choose not to. One example is our commitment to the pedestrian realm — wonderful sidewalks are hugely important to the success of this district. But if those sidewalks walk past the equivalent of the Northern Avenue face of the federal courthouse, we will fail, because that's one of the great urban-design crimes of recent years. And that's something we could have managed if we had pushed the General Services Administration to include, for example, subsidized galleries for Fort Point artists. We chose not to push at the time, partly because we were nervous about our economy and didn't want to demand too much. But that's a specific example of a failure of public will and political will. I think we're in danger of a whole series of failures just like that.

Everything that's been proposed is designed to establish a kind of economic hierarchy that will make Bostonians from other neighborhoods feel very uncomfortable about spending any time here.

Ted Landsmark

A site like this — given the climate, the location, and the views — demands something far more inventive.

Gary Hack



Public transportation is almost nonexistent in these plans. There are neighborhoods in Boston right now that have no way of connecting to this part of the city.

Mary Cooney

We've heard nothing from Chinatown or the North End, which are just as close to this development as is D Street in South Boston.

Ted Landsmark

Elizabeth Padjen: I'm struck by your observation that we *chose* not to push. But I don't agree that there is a lack of consensus — there is enormous consensus on a lot of these issues. There's consensus on the need for affordable housing. There's consensus on the need for a far more extensive public transportation system. There is consensus on the need for a rich pedestrian environment. There's consensus on public access to the waterfront. There's consensus about the desirability of including public institutions in the area; even schools have come up in past conversations. People seem to be rallying around a lot of common goals.



David Dixon: That's true, but I wouldn't call that consensus. I'd say consensus is what you build around an achievable vision, where people understand the costs and the benefits and decide to bear the costs to receive the benefits. For example, there is one way to pay for everything on that list, which is greater density. But there is absolutely no agreement on providing that density. So I think you're right — people have come together around a set of desirable ideals — but people have not come together around the other side of the equation, the supply side.

Gary Hack: I'd like to return to your comment about the federal courthouse, which brings up some of the design challenges in the district. One of the clear lessons from that building is that it's very tough to work with north-facing waterfronts. So I'm not optimistic that the strategy of creating a big passive open space across that waterfront is the right way to go. One of the things I find about the plan generally is that the designers have not been very inventive about the public realm. They've created blocks and streets in a very conventional way, with little passive parks here and there. A site like this — given the climate, the location, and the views – demands something far more inventive.

David Dixon: One way it could be more inventive is to imagine how this part of the waterfront could be of value to a broader cross-section of people. On the one hand, it's great that the ICA [Institute of Contemporary Art] has found a site here; that clearly appeals to a certain cross-section of us. But what might draw other people?

Ted Landsmark: We have to ask ourselves, who do we want here? As an example, take a look at the two sides of the Charles River, between the Museum of Science and Longfellow Bridge. They are very different demographically. Both of them border on neighborhoods with fairly well-off residents. The Boston side is full of activity. People are always jogging and running, and there are concerts, and there's life. The Cambridge side, which is bordered directly by a boat basin and by high-end housing, has a handful of joggers. It's a great place to go for a quiet, calm view of Boston from Cambridge. Now, what constitutes the difference? On the Boston side, there's been an overt effort made to attract a diverse range of people, not all of whom live in that neighborhood. On the Cambridge side, you sense that the waterfront is a private enclave — even though there's a big shopping mall where all kinds of people shop only a block away. The direction we're moving in with the seaport is more likely to result in that same sense of a high-end enclave. So the question is, how do public authorities provide the leadership that drives consensus, that articulates a public value of openness and accessibility?

Steve Hollinger: The obvious answer is you have to differentiate between the types of land uses and activities that attract people. And I generally tend to think that what's best in life is free. What's best in life is available, accessible, doesn't require a ticket, doesn't require you to sit down and have a meal. We hear a lot about the importance of "facilities of public accommodation" which means hotel lobbies and restaurants. Do people really want to come from across the city to the lobby of a hotel? No. We need to discuss what is actually a public or civic structure and what uses draw people. If you look at the Fan Pier proposal and try to identify the places where you don't have to sit in a hotel lobby or buy a cup of coffee in order to feel comfortable, there isn't a whole lot left. At least a park offers a place where you can feel free. You don't feel owned. You feel you can enjoy the water. You can throw a blanket down, and it doesn't cost you anything. And there's something to be treasured about that.

Ann Hershfang: Bob Campbell has pointed out the ramifications of the city's unwillingness to invest any of its own money in the streets and in the parks — it loses control and the ability to shape the public realm. Paris is an example of a city that has invested heavily in its public realm, and the result is wonderful parks created from former industrial sites, and lively public institutions like the Pompidou Center.

We hear a lot about the importance of "facilities of public accommodation" which means hotel lobbies and restaurants. Do people really want to come from across the city to the lobby of a hotel?

Steve Hollinger

Mary Cooney: It's a good point. Every one of the streets shown on the Fan Pier proposal is private. Which means we have no control. Is the public bus going to drop people at the fishing pier? People are going to drag their bait down those streets? How can you call it a "public realm plan" if it's not going to be public?

Ann Hershfang: It's a small-minded and short-sighted attitude on the part of the city. Let me extend this to the surface of the Central Artery, where the city also doesn't want to spend any money. It wants the state to pay, which means it's going to lose control there, too.

Ted Landsmark: In the absence of city investment, what we're creating is in effect a set of gated communities, where private investors, the state, and quasi-public agencies such as Massport maintain control over access for city residents. I'm not sure that creating a commercial gated community along the waterfront is in the best public interest. We don't have enough of that kind of public access to the waterfront in the first place.

Gary Hack: I make a distinction, though, between making sure that the public realm is accessible and the question of whether it's paid for publicly or paid for privately. I think they're two different sets of issues. Prudential Center is a private space, and it's open 24 hours a day. To my knowledge, no one is excluded from walking through those arcades. And on any day of the week there are probably more people walking those arcades than any other public space in the city. They're maintained privately, and they're accessible publicly because of an agreement between Prudential and the owners and the city. You can do that through agreements. But it is true that if you want to create significant public spaces such as large parks, you really have only two ways to do it. Either the public has to put up some money to do it, or as David said earlier, you have to trade building density for amenities. The way Boston has done business over the last several years is to trade density for amenities. And that has framed these debates over whether the resulting impacts are too great on adjacent communities. There are limits to how much you can squeeze out of developers by way of contributions to the public realm without over-stressing the whole system.

Steve Hollinger: It's also hard to plan a very broad agenda by just negotiating parcel by parcel for your benefits. It depends too much on who's at the table. Why shouldn't those benefits be set in stone before the developer approaches the table? Similarly, I believe that the city should be tougher on zoning. You shouldn't have plans for open space based on negotiation. These things should be firm, and they should be zoned.

Tom Keane: We're also seeing another phenomenon, which is the political desire to get something — anything — built, to get something in the ground even if it's not good. We're suffering from a simple lack of patience. There's a monument-building ethos out there — this mayor wants to have something in the ground so it will be his thing, not the next mayor's.

Elizabeth Padjen: I think that the system of bartering with developers for public benefits has taught people a certain level of distrust. They don't trust public officials to protect their interests in the public realm. And once that trust is gone, you create a situation in which nothing gets done, because everyone is bickering.

We're seeing the ramifications of that distrust in the current debates about public open space — which was once universally regarded as a good thing. Now we're seeing a very curious divide. Planning officials and many design professionals have done a lot of thinking about public space, and have come to understand why some spaces work well and others don't. That thinking has shaped a lot of the rationale behind relatively limited open space on the Fan Pier, which, as a north-facing site in a northern climate, might not be terribly active. That thinking is now lined up against a much broader community reaction, the belief that open space is good stuff — what's wrong with having a park? Which in turn leads to some very interesting questions: How do we use open space? What does it mean? And in this case, what does it mean when that space is on the waterfront? I submit there's something far more important here, which has very little to do with how many bodies walk across a space, or how much income you can generate from the buildings that surround that public space, and that is the issue of symbolic civic space. I might walk across the Common only twice a year, but I'm glad to know it's there. It's a symbolic civic space. Similarly, I'm glad to know that there are national parks out West; I have never visited them, but they represent an idea that is terribly important. And I wonder if that's not something that the community is addressing instinctively, but that the political leadership and certainly the development community have forgotten.

Tom Keane: I happen to fall on the side of the debate that says open space is good stuff. But I think a lot of the debate in Boston has been informed by one particular open space, and that is City Hall Plaza, which is without question not a good open space. And I think that the failure of City Hall Plaza informed a lot of the mayor's comments about open space on the waterfront, when he suggested that the people pushing for more open space on the waterfront are trying to create something suburban. But I can assure you that large open spaces in a city do work: The Esplanade. The Public Garden. The Common. One thing is certain: Once you have developed it, you will never have that open space again

Steve Hollinger: Especially open space on a waterfront. Even the most ardent of green-space advocates are not asking for prairies and Duxbury, as the mayor suggested. They are asking for a reasonable-size parcel that would be a beautiful park.

avid Dixon: As an urban designer, I probably ill more on the other side of the debate. It would e a lot easier for me to imagine a large open space ere if I knew that there were going to be enough eople living and working nearby or staying in otels, so that it would be vital and active. Otherise, my great concern is that when we're all done, ere aren't going to be many people there.

lizabeth Padjen: Why is it important that there e a lot of people there?

avid Dixon: Because we want enough people support program activity. We need a critical mass support the sense of this place as a community.

lizabeth Padjen: I would suggest, though, that e difference here is that this site is on the aterfront. I agree absolutely that if you have an en space that's in the middle of the city, it needs be active. But I think there's something in the uman psyche that is drawn to the intersection etween land and water, particularly land and the a. It's a spiritual thing. You can go out to Crane's each in the middle of January and you'll find eople there. As urban designers, we've been taught at crowds and activity are desirable urban condions. But sometimes solitude is a good thing. And litude by the sea can be an especially good thing.

avid Dixon: I think we already have those pportunities — in Charlestown, in East Boston, the Harbor Islands. I don't think we need one ore opportunity for solitude. I think we need an pportunity for a really wonderful, engaging, mpelling waterfront that draws us together as a mmunity. And we don't have that yet.

d Landsmark: But the places you described are aces that are not perceived to be accessible to most eople in the city. No one knows that all you have do is get off the Blue Line in Maverick and ere's water and a great view of the harbor, or that u can sail out of the Charlestown Navy Yard on ourageous. Those are not accessible places. And e Boston Harbor Islands? They require funds d a boat.

eve Hollinger: If we're envisioning the possility of a neighborhood evolving over the next or 30 years, we have to acknowledge that a park critical to the success of a neighborhood. People ed to meet, to gather on the street, to talk to each her, to sit down, to walk their dogs. Then the next estion becomes, where would you want a park in waterfront neighborhood? We're about to make a cision that will affect the future of this entire area.

Ann Hershfang: We also need to remember that Bostonians are used to having visual connections to the water. You can see the water from downtown and from South Boston. The old wharf buildings like Lewis Wharf and Commercial Wharf extend out into the harbor but keep the harbor views open. Rowes Wharf, on the other hand, is a beautiful building, but it blocks off the waterfront. The views from the South Boston Waterfront will be blocked by one-story buildings as effectively as by 30-story buildings.

Mary Cooney: We've been reduced to "view corridors," as opposed to having a real vista.

Ted Landsmark: When Rowes Wharf was going up, I was involved in a discussion about maintaining waterfront access and whether the proposed public access would be sufficient to encourage people from all over the city to feel comfortable going down to Rowes with a Hibachi and having a cookout. And we all laughed. There are presumably some parts of Boston where people from anywhere in the city would feel comfortable on a Sunday afternoon picnic, as they do along the Esplanade. And it seems to me that that's a public value we ought to try to protect.

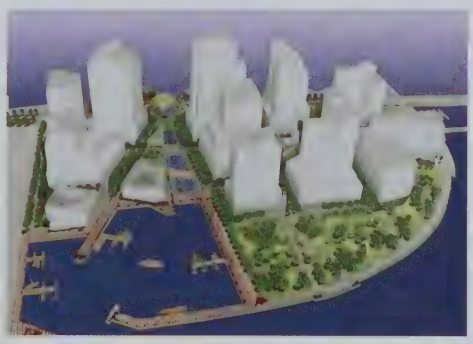
Every one of the streets shown on the Fan Pier proposal is private. ...How can you call it a "public realm plan" if it's not going to be public?

Mary Cooney



Competing visions of the Fan Pier (as of April 2000)

The "Pritzker proposal"



The "McCourt proposal"

Images courtesy of The McCourt Company, Inc

Tom Keane: When you do a master plan like this, it's important to have some sense of humility. It's important to understand that we may not necessarily know what's going to work. And that's why we need to preserve critical open spaces. The Esplanade, for example, has not worked particularly well in the past. Thank God no one said, oh well, it doesn't work, people aren't showing up, so let's just put buildings along there. At various times, the Common has not worked, but we've been able to figure out how to fix it. And it may be that as the seaport district grows and the community evolves, and as the rest of Boston changes and evolves along with it, we may see different usage patterns along there. At some point we might conclude that we do need a playground or a fishing pier or a skateboard park. But I can assure you that if we build right up to the water's edge today, we'll never have those choices.

Elizabeth Padjen: I can imagine the mayor and the BRA [Boston Redevelopment Authority] staff reading this transcript and saying, "There they go again, more blue-sky discussions — what about the real world that we have to deal with?" So I'll ask you: What about the real world that they have to deal with?

Steve Hollinger: The real world that they have to deal with isn't put on the table for us to consider. For example, we don't know the difference between what the Fan Pier developers actually need to build to make the project viable, and what they're adding on top of that. That's where you could figure out how to fund a park. But we don't know those numbers.

Mary Cooney: We were told that they needed four buildings on the cove. And at a meeting I asked, "Why do we need four buildings on a cove? Why can't you at least take one of them out? You've totally blocked off the area." But they needed all four. Then the mayor asked them to remove one, and suddenly, the building's off the cove.



Photo courtesy of The McCourt Company, Inc.

Downtown Boston viewed from the seaport district.

David Dixon: I think the city must be able to articulate what must be included in terms of public benefits and make a believable effort to understand the cost implications for the developer, and then let the developer come back with a proposal. If the development is proposed first, and then you begin to talk about what you need from it, you'll end up in endless discussion because you will never find the ultimate truth. But if the city can say, this is the price of entry and this is what we will allow, at least it's vastly narrowed the terms.

Elizabeth Padjen: Tom, as a former city councilor, you're the closest thing we have to a politician in this discussion. So I'd like to ask if you can imagine a political process that would fundamentally change the course of development in this district. If we are right, that there is broad-based agreement on goals for this district that are probably shared by many of the neighborhoods, is there any way that the political momentum can be redirected?

Tom Keane: The important thing to remember is that we're still in the middle of the political process. What we have are a number of competing, contentious voices, some of which have legal standing, some of which have public standing. They're all trying to make their case. There is no juggernaut here; I think that's one of the things that the BRA's found out about this. It is a really messy process. I hope that, despite all the contention, people of goodwill will continue to try to advance ideas and solutions that address the various competing desires that are out there. From a political point of view, I also think it's important that people — politicians, developers, and residents — keep an open mind on new proposals. The leadership in the city has too quickly closed its mind to new ideas, just because they weren't invented within City Hall.

Elizabeth Padjen: If the political leaders are closed-minded, is there anything that will open their minds?

Tom Keane: Actually it has happened in at least one case. The mayor was very closed-minded about keeping those four buildings on the Fan Pier. And then he was told he would be sued and he would lose, and suddenly he became more open-minded. That's one process that works.

Ted Landsmark: I spent eight years in the mayor's office under two administrations — under two mayors who both worked closely with advisors. Let's say you're the mayor, and you've taken a misstep. Someone comes to you quietly, usually through one of your trusted advisors, and says to you that you are moving down a path that is not only the wrong path, but also one that will make you look bad. You listen, and then you use the levers that are available to a mayor to change direction. Sometimes you go to the *Globe* editorial board to get them to help raise consciousness. Sometimes you go to community groups, and you encourage them, even though they haven't been at the table, to raise appropriate questions. Sometimes you simply use the

power that comes with being the mayor in this city and announce that things are going to be different. But I think the key is allowing advisors to come forward not just with criticism, but with an alternative that arguably is better. That requires political confidence to take the risk of the short-term hit, knowing that, in the long run, the benefits will bounce back to you. This mayor, who is likely to be running unopposed in another year or so, has the luxury of being able to change his mind on a range of things without having that rebound to his political detriment.

The problem to date is that much of the discussion has occurred in very small rooms. We've heard nothing from Chinatown or the North End, which are just as close to this development as is D Street in South Boston. Nor have we heard from other constituencies. We've only recently heard from the arts constituency. Keeping a cultural presence in the community would really make that area a destination not only for tourists, but also for residents of Boston. That is one way that a mayor who's interested in preservation and main streets and communities could attach his name to a different vision for this district.

Steve Hollinger: The arts neighborhood has come up a few times. I think that is symbolic of an asset that needs to be valued, but is overlooked because of our planning process. Boston has a unique problem in that its planning and economic development needs must be managed by one agency, the Boston Redevelopment Authority. And because of that situation, we have a conflict between developing maximum economic benefit for the city and doing good planning. If we really wanted to do a better job of creating a new community on the waterfront, we would separate the economic development agenda from the planning agenda, and establish a separate planning body. A planning department would recognize the value of the arts community and make accommodations for it in its planning decisions. The planning department would often be at war with the economic development department, but we would see open, public discussion of competing values.

David Dixon: I once asked John Bok, a lawyer who's been one of Boston's civic leaders, if he ever thought about running for office or working in the public sector. His answer was, "It's really not the public sector that leads. It must be community advocates who raise new issues and take risks and pose difficult and challenging possibilities." In fact, that's what has happened around the seaport. Politics makes it impossible for the public sector to lead on really challenging planning and design issues. The South Boston community, the BSA [Boston Society of Architects], SAND [Seaport Alliance for Neighborhood Design], and a number of other community groups have contributed a lot of creative thinking. But I think we've all been hobbled by our history. Most of the development debate in the last couple decades focused on protecting neighborhoods from large projects, so we developed a rhetoric that lower and smaller is better. We lack a rhetoric for talking about developing a new district — we tend to apply the same debate. And so we talk about protecting, not creating. I think one of the things we have to acknowledge is that, if we're going to ask our political leaders to lead, we owe them some cooperation as citizens. And that is lacking in the seaport. There are a lot of advocacy groups, but there is no broad-based grassroot effort.

Gary Hack: In the past, the city has effectively used citizens' advisory committees. The Prudential project was an example — it had failed because of concerns over density and impacts on the neighborhoods. An advisory committee was formed, representing 22 community groups. In the end — which was three years and 170 meetings later — they all endorsed the new proposal. The community groups have to be a party to the process in a very substantial way from the beginning — not after the fact. So we may well be seeing a failure of process for the seaport, one that has created misfits between people's expectations and what's being delivered.

Ann Hershfang: The Southwest Corridor project is another example — a very successful project that worked because of the intense involvement of three communities. It took time, but it allowed a back-and-forth process between neighborhood concerns and technical and political concerns. My sense is that a similar process would resolve many of the issues for the waterfront — bringing the right groups together in the right place. I'm sorry to say I also doubt that the city leaders are capable of doing it for various reasons. I'm not sure they have the skill; they may not have time or the money. All the parties involved are beleaguered by political pressure, which may make it difficult for them to coalesce as a decision-making group. But the seaport offers such opportunity — it is sad to imagine that it could all fall apart because of a failure of process. This can be the new Boston. ■■■

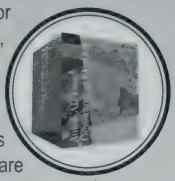
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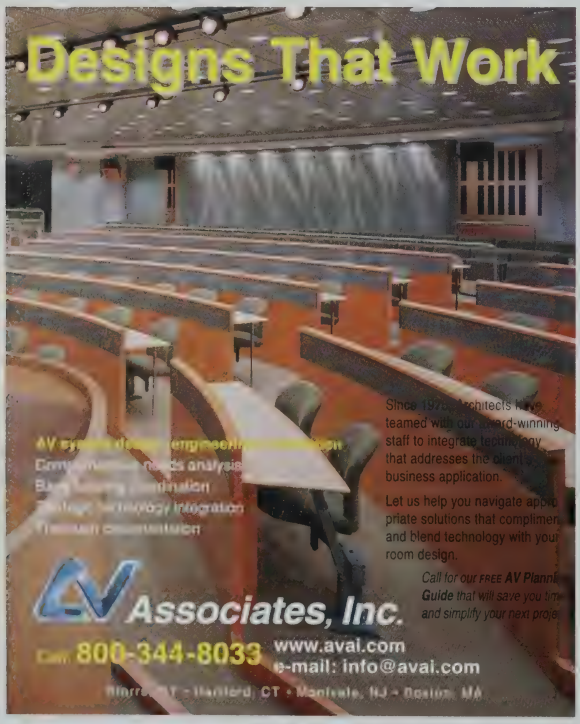
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Rendezvous by Design

The automobile city and the loss of serendipity

by John R. Stilgoe

"So how did you two meet?" Couples meeting couples still ask the same question. And anyone interested in urban structure and space must pay close attention to the answer, for the urban fabric no longer facilitates serendipitous encounter. A plethora of communication devices now masks the fundamental meaning of "city." A city is a communication device itself. But the device works only when people meet each other in a way fundamental to human happiness.

Until the 1880s, unmarried women stayed home and met eligible bachelors at orchestrated social events like cotillions and barn dances or through personal introduction—and by serendipitous accident. The cumbersome process of meeting and courtship preoccupied whole generations of novelists, but nowadays romances like Jane Austen's 1816 *Persuasion* mystify men and women growing accustomed to personal ads and electronic chat rooms. But does some vague and unfortunate change in urban life drive the unhappiness and depression Robert E. Lane brilliantly describes in his new book, *The Loss of Happiness in Market Democracies?* Do electronic media subvert not only personal happiness, but the urban fabric, too?

Architects easily forget the era before 1890, when department-store windows finally and suddenly gave women a moral reason for standing on sidewalks, when "street-walker" began to disappear as a euphemism for "prostitute," when city people blossomed free of rural tradition. They forget, too, the yeasty urbanity of the brief era that followed, the era novelist Stephen Crane detailed in his 1896 *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* and that Theodore Dreiser explicated so forcefully in his 1900 novel *Sister Carrie* that his publisher refused to distribute the book. Yet in that brief, far too easily forgotten urban era lie clues to revitalizing an urban fabric that facilitates psyche-strengthening personal encounters in ways far beyond any virtual-reality facsimile.

Armored inside the glass-and-steel automobile carapace, protected by automatic locks and cellular phones, contemporary city motorists pose a stunning riddle to historians unraveling the mysteries of urban architecture and urban design between 1890 and 1920. Cars did more than jam boulevards and intersections. They dimmed the startling, utterly modern excitement of the sidewalk, the tall-building lobby, and the department-store café, an excitement grounded in meeting friends, acquaintances, and above all, strangers in new sorts of spaces designed for people who knew themselves as modern. In the first years of the 20th century, Margaret Penrose and Laura Dent Crane each produced a series of young-adult-reader novels called *The Motor Girls* and *The Automobile Girls*, in which teenage girls temporarily freed from parental control roar into all sorts of adventure best exemplified in *The Automobile Girls at Washington: Checkmating the Plots of Foreign Spies.* The girl-focused driving novels predate the Nancy Drew and Hardy Boys detective series by 20 years, and nowadays offer a spectacular view not only of fast-changing female roles in urban life, but the sudden wrenching of the urban fabric itself as men and women alike began cruising in relative isolation. Urban politeness — what "urbanity" essentially designates — decayed as both men and women discovered that the automobile insulated them from other urban travelers, that it made them anonymous. No longer did city people expect "boulevard manners" everywhere; instead they quickly focused on motor-vehicle traffic control.

Put simply, the urban automobile squelched serendipity, especially the serendipity of meeting the perfect man or woman or an old acquaintance or the friend from two blocks away. As the automobile became something more than a trendy technological toy, the arbiters of manners confronted a genuine challenge.

Etiquette books published between about 1890 and 1915 emphasize the continuous accidental meetings of strangers, often male and female strangers, in new sorts of spaces like Pullman-car sleeping accommodations, tall-building elevators, and railroad terminals. The books accepted the ordinariness of all social classes mixing on the street, on the subway, in libraries. But by the 1920s, etiquette authorities knew that automobile ownership had essentially divided urban populations into motorists and everyone else. Such division proves incredibly tricky to trace, but by the 1930s, when Dashiell Hammett published *The Maltese Falcon* and *Red Harvest* and *The Thin Man*, all urban-set mystery novels building on his 1920s short stories involving blundering into the wrong part of town, Americans knew the distinction between people with cars and people who took the trolley. Hollywood only furthered the distinction throughout the 1930s, making clear the perils and rewards of chance encounters like that exemplified in the 1934 film

It Happened One Night, in which a society girl finally travels by bus. After 1930, etiquette-book writers ignored the street and sidewalk, the subway platform, and the grocery store, and left the growing split in urban living to writers of detective stories, Hollywood scripts, and romantic novels. Boulevard manners skidded into defensive driving.

Architects need to study the buildings and spaces shaped between about 1890 and 1915, in the magic moment when city people enjoyed a stimulating modernity but were not yet imprisoned in and by the automobile. Most cities still retain sumptuous puzzles like the intersection of Boylston Street and the Fenway in Boston where stately apartment houses with names like "Fenmore" face curvilinear streets and a linear, waterfront park, but offer only token automobile parking. The old bridges over the Muddy River suggest what historians know, that turn-of-the-century Bostonians enjoyed canoeing and that they loved walking on weekends, following the Fenway and the Jamaica Way all the miles to Franklin Park. But how else did the apartment occupants get around before the motor car? Did they use the trolley system? Did they know the trolley system in a sophisticated way almost impossible to recover today? How did the urban fabric work when everyone walked the streets freely but before the automobile made pedestrians the organized prisoners of traffic engineering?



Envisioning a city without automobiles means paying attention to the city just before the automobile era, but after the arrival of the telephone and electricity. That is the magic moment of the 1910 guidebook *Everywhere in Boston and How to Get There,* a thick, fine-printed pocket-sized book that not only lists every streetcar, subway, and elevated railway route in Boston and contiguous cities and towns, but also sorts every park, railroad station, wharf, hospital, and other popular destination, and every street alphabetically within a framework of rapid-transit route numbers. *Everywhere in Boston* remains a masterpiece of systems theory, for its judicious display of options reveals how the long-vanished transit system functioned as a series of optional routes between addresses — not as colored lines on a map. Indeed, the book provides no maps at all but instead creates a skein of numbers that connect addresses. Just before the automobile wrenched urban society into a chaotic, exhaust-choked epoch still remembered as the "Roaring Twenties," everyone moved swiftly on an electrified, number-based net, and delighted in accidental encounters—not accidents.

Such encounters strengthened social cohesion, of course, but they deepened personal happiness, too. Certainly they enlarged the mind with all sorts of new information. But perhaps more importantly, they expanded the psyche. "What's new?"— the common greeting phrase of the city in 1905 — meant more than new information. It meant the fundamental magic of the city just before the automobile. A new encounter in real space.

Author of many books, most recently *Outside Lies Magic,* John R. Stilgoe is Orchard Professor in the History of Landscape at Harvard University. He is writing a book about the intersection of the pre-automobile city and contemporary cybernetics.



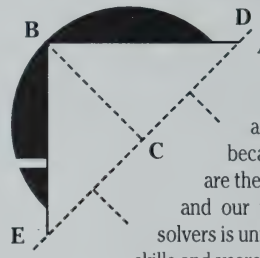
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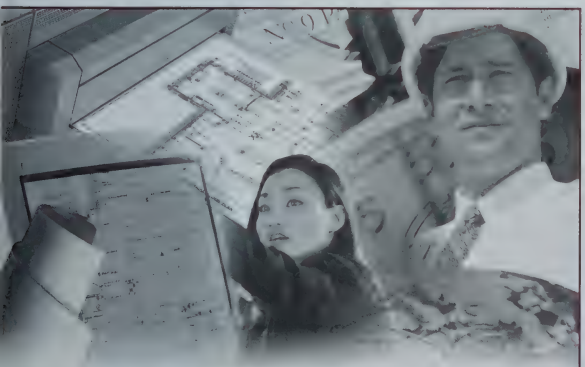
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Last Chance for the First Colony

by Robert Yaro and Julia Koster



In the center of the triangle between Providence, Boston, and Cape Cod is a green heart, a quarter of a million acres of largely unfragmented landscapes and rural communities. Rare natural systems, including globally significant pine barrens, coastal ponds, and cedar swamps are contained in its borders. There are special places here: rivers, ponds, forests, and cranberry bogs with their red blaze at harves time. People have co-existed with this landscape for centuries, and their history is revealed along the Wampanoag Trail, in New England's First Colony — settled by the Pilgrims in 1620 — in cities shaped by whaling and textiles, and in centuries-old family farms and woodlots.

Photo: © 2000 Alex S. MacLean/Landslides

However, this last piece of the First Colony is on the brink of changing forever. Look more closely, and you find development pressures pushing in from all directions.

Although most of the residents see their towns as distinct communities rather than suburbs of Boston or Providence, the social and economic well-being of rural southeastern Massachusetts is increasingly tied to the larger metropolitan regions. Rapid population growth — the fastest in Massachusetts — and rising land values are occurring all around this green heart. But growth isn't drawn to the existing cities. Instead, new development is gobbling up farms and forests, creeping along highways and sprouting up at interchanges. It is the bland, homogeneous development of Anywhere, USA: shopping malls, strip development, and McMansions in suburban subdivisions. At risk is the very character of these rural communities, where fire stations are still manned by volunteer firefighters.

Water connects the disparate communities in the area in largely pristine rivers, lakes, and ponds, and in vast groundwater supplies hidden from view — still so abundant that they are taken for granted. But at current growth rates, seven towns in this area will be water-deficient communities by the year 2020. Yet the Plymouth/Carver aquifer, the Commonwealth's largest sole-source aquifer, has no special protection.

Still, it is not enough to think in terms of protection of the region's water, natural resources, and biodiversity. The economic and social needs of its people demand attention, too: The area lags behind many of the communities in eastern Massachusetts in employment, economic growth, and education. Residents want jobs, services, and convenient transportation. Large landholders wish to maintain their farms, but see little likelihood that their children will continue in the farming or forestry tradition; rising land costs push them towards land sales. Newcomers see an opportunity to live in an unspoiled rural environment. The trick is to manage the growth in a way that equitably benefits all and provides protection for special, fragile resources.

The answer lies in thinking beyond town boundaries and recognizing regional ties. Together, towns can work toward a shared vision for the region, a vision composed of strong, discrete towns and cities, protected water resources, working and natural landscapes, and rich biological diversity. By creating a "rural resource reserve" for southeastern Massachusetts, communities can think locally and act regionally, taking control over future growth and protecting this green heart. Ten towns constitute this proposed rural resource reserve, joined by four urban areas — Taunton, New Bedford, Plymouth and Fall River — that share in the solutions and the benefits of regional cooperation.

Currently, this area doesn't have the tools to manage its inevitable growth. Over 75 percent of the towns in the region have no planning staff and lack master plans. Per capita spending on regional planning is 15 cents annually; Cape Cod spends $2. Yet the potential impact of allowable development is enormous. Current zoning in southeastern Massachusetts would permit 12 million new jobs; total employment in all of Massachusetts is now only 3 million. The rural town of Lakeville, for example, is currently zoned for an additional 48 million square feet of commercial and industrial space — approximately the same as Boston's downtown commercial capacity. There is simply not enough funding to do the job, and this part of Massachusetts has until recently received far less than its fair share of state land conservation funding. But most critically, the communities here do not think of this area as a region, with mutual interests and shared goals. Without working together, the alternative is a region that falls apart on our watch.

Photo: © 2000 Alex S. MacLean/Landslides



Opposite: Cranberry harvest, Plymouth County

Above: Encroaching development southeastern Massachusetts

The first step towards protection is to create a regional community. Regional efforts nationwide have been initiated by a variety of mechanisms, some top-down and others ground-up. The most effective approach for this area may be a voluntary partnership between the municipalities and the state, expressed in a regional compact. This effort would build on the success of two other regional compacts in southeastern Massachusetts, the Cape Cod Commission and the Martha's Vineyard Commission. Both of these agencies have had considerable success in managing growth and protecting the landscapes of these special places. A legislative solution may also lie in "regional rule," a new approach that enhances home rule by giving communities greater collective bargaining power, a shared vision for the resources that don't recognize political boundaries, and more tools to manage growth and protect valued resources.

The proposed rural resource reserve could be the focus of several strategies:

- Creation of a regional plan, with local plans tailored to local needs but consistent with regional objectives.
- Directing growth toward city and town centers and specified transportation hubs, away from sensitive landscapes.
- Use of rural-resource zoning and transfers of development rights to reduce development pressure in rural areas and natural ecosystems.
- Innovative funding mechanisms, including sharing of the regional commercial tax-base.
- Increased land protection efforts through coordination of land-protection groups and agencies, increased funding, and resources to enforce regulations.
- Water resource management for greater protection of water quality and quantity.
- Economic development initiatives that play up the region's strengths: new agricultural uses, eco-tourism, recreation, and urban infill and brownfield redevelopment.

The Commonwealth and other agencies can offer significant incentives for regional cooperation. They have a stake in protecting the region's biodiversity and water supplies and in maintaining a quality of life that will express itself in improved economic opportunities for the area. Incentives should include significantly increased funding for planning, land protection, and rural infrastructure, changes to laws that give the rural resource reserve more flexibility, and a commitment to make state actions consistent with regional plans.

The region faces a stark choice: either to create a desirable regional vision today, or to accept the inevitable "regional subdivision" tomorrow. A regional compact can become a blueprint for preserving its character, natural resources, and rural economy — and serve as a national model for regions facing similar pressures. And 20 years from now, when we celebrate the 400th anniversary of the landing at Plymouth Rock, this last rural place in the First Colony will have retained its exceptional character and quality as the region's "green heart." ■■■

Robert Yaro is visiting design critic at the Harvard Graduate School of Design and is executive director of the Regional Plan Association in New York. He is also co-author of *Dealing with Change in the Connecticut River Valley*. This article was prepared with the assistance of Julia Koster and is based on a study conducted by the Harvard Graduate School of Design, working with the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District and a task force of citizen representatives. This project was sponsored by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs.









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ARCHITECTURAL RENDERING

The Everyday City

Margaret Crawford talks with George Thrush AIA



All photos courtesy Margaret Crawford



Margaret Crawford was recently appointed professor of urban design and planning theory at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. She was previously the chair of the history, theory, and humanities program at Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc). Her books include *Building the Workingman's Paradise: The Design of the American Company Town* and, most recently, *Everyday Urbanism* (co-edited with John Kaliski and John Chase).

George Thrush AIA is head of the architecture program at Northeastern University and a principal of SmartArchitecture in Cambridge.

THRUSH: You've just come to Boston from Los Angeles, two cities that most of us imagine to be at the opposite ends of the architectural and social spectrum of the United States. Is that true? Or are there more similarities than we imagine?

CRAWFORD: I've barely arrived in Boston, so it's hard for me to say. But I am shocked that Bostonians seem to have such a low regard for Los Angeles. I would defend Los Angeles as a viable place to live in. Living in LA is much different from visiting LA.

THRUSH: In what way?

CRAWFORD: When visitors come to LA, people always take them to the most LA thing possible, the most shocking, the most outrageous, the most bizarre. People are proud of how extreme Los Angeles is, so they always try to show the most extreme part to their guests. But everyday life there is very different. Almost everyone has a neighborhood-focused life. Los Angeles is a city of almost infinite neighborhoods. And yet it also offers the possibility of extraordinary mobility and choice and freedom. So I would defend a lot of aspects of Los Angeles. I would even defend the automotive aspect, even though the city should certainly also offer more pedestrian choices. But there is a kind of thrill of mobility, which I see as a good thing. It breaks down barriers. I would also defend the concept of a city without a central downtown — which is essentially the LA model.

THRUSH: Would you call that an issue of hierarchy?

CRAWFORD: Yes. It is an issue of hierarchy. Downtowns typically are controlled by the powerful. Having multiple downtowns means that there are many, many choices. People move around Los Angeles, choosing different centers for different purposes. And even people who live in the same neighborhood often choose different centers. I live in the Hollywood Hills, for example. The closest urban center is Hollywood, but my focus has been West Hollywood and Beverly Hills — largely because I was at UCLA for a long time and they were on my way home. But I have neighbors who are focused on Glendale or the Valley. So people pick and choose where they want to be. I'm not sure what all the determinants of that are. It has to do with their commuting route. It has to do with their sensibility. It has to do with all kinds of lifestyle choices.

THRUSH: But is there some commensurate risk with that model? Traditional cities, for example, establish a hierarchy of public space that suggests some overarching unity. Do Angelenos have a shared identity?

CRAWFORD: I think that Angelenos have multiple identities. Actually everyone in the region identifies with Southern California and Los Angeles — they identify with the geography and the lifestyle. People in Los Angeles also identify with their neighborhoods. But in many senses, California identity is bland compared to some of the long-standing ethnic identities that you find on the East Coast, in ethnic neighborhoods, for example. Some of that still exists in Los Angeles, but there are also strong homogenizing factors. And so you meet people whose parents are from China and whose son is a six-foot-tall kid who talks like every other Los Angeles teenager. They all sound like surfers, and they're all pretty bland. But I actually see that as a very positive thing, that the incredible diversity of ethnicity turns into this bland surfer kid.

THRUSH: It's a melting pot.

CRAWFORD: Yes, to some degree. But the complexity of ethnicity in Los Angeles is one of the most fascinating things about it. It exists in other places, too, but Los Angeles is an extreme case. Los Angeles is no longer dominantly white, and the lines of ethnicity are often hard to read. In Hollywood, for example, the Thai community just celebrated a major triumph — they got a blue street sign that says "Thai Town." But now the Armenians who also live there are completely outraged. And in fact, based on the population, the area is overwhelmingly Hispanic. So now it's never just one group versus the other, because there are 20 other groups in the mix.

THRUSH: It sounds like LA is a model, at least conceptually, for America's future — in the sense that it is certainly an evermore multi-ethnic, multicultural place.

CRAWFORD: I think it is. Los Angeles is a vision of what the future's going to be like.



THRUSH: The physical manifestations of that kind of change are particularly interesting. People tend to discuss change in terms of the loss of something, as opposed to a new possibility. But your book *Everyday Urbanism* addresses the upside.

CRAWFORD: I do think it's important to give up this narrative of loss, which is so pervasive. I'm astonished by it, because people will read almost any sort of new condition as worse than some magic moment in the past. So they develop a narrative to describe that sense of loss. But how do you actually identify new typologies and work with them? That's actually a more interesting question. It's why I've engaged in ethnographic methods — to really observe and document what goes on. For example, Los Angeles has always been seen as the death of street culture. But if you drive or even walk around the streets of Los Angeles, you see something

completely different. The streets are alive with activity — informal activity that is also mostly illegal activity. But with the slightest nudge, it could become official, sanctioned activity. The activities themselves aren't that different from what most conventional urban designers might prescribe. It's just that the people who do them are different.

THRUSH: Or they do them in slightly different ways.

CRAWFORD: Yes. There is an amazing variety in the ways people use streets, and nobody's working with it. I found another example on my daily commute — which is how I've documented a lot of my examples.

THRUSH: Commuting and researching — ultimate multitasking.

CRAWFORD: Exactly! I found a desolate parking lot, part of a strip mall — the sort of place that would make most designers shake their heads sadly. Yet I have seen the most astonishing things going on there. It becomes an informal marketplace. On holidays, people bring U-Hauls filled with crafts, Afro-centric crafts that they've made at home, which they sell for Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, and Christmas. They spread them out on the mandated grassy strip outside McDonald's and hang things on the spindly little trees that have been planted there. You could actually follow the tide of public opinion during the OJ trial from the T-shirts that were being sold there. There are tamale sellers — completely illegal. But there are West Side housewives who ask their cleaning ladies to stop and buy them tamales. So the ripple effect of these activities is more extensive than you might imagine. It isn't just Central American residents walking to buy these tamales. West Side housewives are having them, too.

THRUSH: You make a very interesting and very accurate point in *Everyday Urbanism* about the fact that we have so successfully romanticized the democracy that is associated with traditional urban forms, that we've stopped checking whether or not those forms are actually yielding the kind of collective use that we think they are.

CRAWFORD: There is confusion about two distinct functions of public space. One is the alleged democratic function, which means active discussion of pressing issues. It's related to the notion of community — the notion of the Athenian agora and public discussion, which is necessarily limited to people who are actually able to talk to each other and who have the same set of concerns. And then there's the Richard Sennett idea of publicness, which means seeing difference on the street — being exposed to multiple sorts of lives. That view of public space doesn't include any kind of engagement or discussion. It really is about strangers.

THRUSH: And yet those two functions are probably together the two top selling-points of city life. People want a lot from their cities — they want community and anonymity. Reading *Everyday Urbanism*, I was struck by the number and variety of interactions you've identified between people on the streets. You seem to advocate a bottom-up approach to urban design — starting with an empirical study of the city and then trying to respond to what exists. It's the opposite of more traditional approaches, which could be described as the rational imposition of known things. An example of that would be the City Beautiful movement, when a very self-conscious, willful imposition of civic imagery, a vision of shared public life, was seen as an antidote to the runaway commercial development of the latter half of the 19th century. Do you imagine that an analogous kind of language of collectivity could emerge by working from the bottom up? Or do you not think that's important?



CRAWFORD: No, I actually think that's a very good question. But this approach doesn't deny the other. It simply works in the nooks and crannies of urbanism. Civic architecture is potentially a very rich vehicle for improving cities. It's a very clear expression of what the state should provide its citizens. *Everyday Urbanism* was intended to address a gap that existed but wasn't really being discussed. It is not the only answer, but it is one of many ways of discussing the city.

THRUSH: You identified not just a gap, but a space you could drive several trucks through, between the way people live their lives and the way the design community prescribes solutions. Even using the word "solutions" presumes that designers already have a clear identification of the problem.

RAWFORD: It presumes the existence of a roblem. But that's how professionals work: hey must identify problems and then they find olutions. That's the professional enterprise, and structures things in a very narrow way. I'm ot denigrating designers at all. But I think the rofession needs to be more permeable, more exible, more shape-shifting. Designers need to be ore responsive to what actually exists now. Mini-malls in Los Angeles are one example — they placed corner gas stations after the '70s energy risis and have become a ubiquitous building type. he sites were relatively valuable, and the malls ere conceived as a 15- to 20-year placeholder that ould have a good return but could be easily emolished or made into something else. You could y that mini-malls are the product of the most ebased development impulses, yet they turned out be an extraordinarily useful building type in rms of convenience — which is a valid issue. And ey've been a significant factor in immigrant ntrepreneurship because they offer cheap start-up pace. The best ethnic restaurants in LA are in mini-alls. Then people started building fancier mini-alls, taking the type in new directions, and it rned out to be a remarkably flexible and useful rban typology. After five years or so, some people ied to regulate them and prevent construction of ore of them. But the combination of easy parking id cheap rent serves a purpose.

ost design professionals cannot deal with mini-alls. The New Urbanists find them particularly ebased, because they are so untraditionally civic in eir appearance. But it seems to me that this is a uilding type that architects could have accepted id worked with to the benefit of everyone in terms public space. I live across the street from a mini-all, and everybody in my neighborhood goes ere. The moms get their Starbuck's coffee after opping their kids at pre-school, the 20-something piring screenwriters hang out there night and day, eople walk their dogs there, and you see people nging out in the parking lot chatting. It's credibly active, and with a little nudge from the ty — a small park for example — it could be even ore so.

THRUSH: Your writing has been laser-focused on these issues of professionalism versus social construction. You're trying to make inroads in the system by which land gets developed and space gets organized. But it seems to me that there are two kinds of cities in the United States: cities that are so popular that the shaping of space — civic control — is possible; and cities where the opposite is true because they are so desperate to get any kind of development. Boston might be an example of the first; East St. Louis would be an example of the second.



CRAWFORD: Los Angeles is another city that has always been at the mercy of real-estate development. It is a city created almost purely through real-estate development. Some people might argue that planning has been quite active there, but it's always been in the service of development. And even now, Los Angeles is the most development-friendly city you can imagine. You can do anything.

THRUSH: The challenge of enticing positive private development is one issue our design schools often overlook — they tend to focus on the easier issue of what to add to an urban environment that is already vital and healthy. We focus on Boston, LA, Miami. Not Detroit.

CRAWFORD: I do think that these are the questions that schools of architecture and planning should be addressing. Massive disinvestment is a significant issue — Baltimore is another example of

a city that is struggling despite a generally strong national economy. Every city has a unique combination of urban politics, economic change, surplus property, employment and unemployment. But some issues are more responsive to design solutions than others. Suburban development is one example. The New Urbanists own the day now, because they are the only people who said, let's attack this problem.

THRUSH: Perhaps the only thing that is more troubling than some of the less cogent arguments of the New Urbanists is the character of the opposition's arguments, which strike me as fatuous and shallow and style-obsessed. They've turned the discussion into a diatribe about middle-class taste, instead of a meaningful examination of settlement patterns in the United States.

CRAWFORD: I know. Taste is an incredible barrier for architects. It really keeps them from engaging with the critical issues of our time. I have to give credit to people like Andres Duany. He is one of the very few designers who are actually having an effect on the American built environment. And that's where the game is. So why aren't more people playing? I am very puzzled by that. Certainly there is no shortage of talent or skill. I think that architects and a lot of urban designers have really backed themselves into corners by refusing to deal with these issues. New Urbanists don't provide all the answers, and their answers aren't necessarily right. For example, the street grid is one of their icons. But is that meaningful? I would say not necessarily. And is it more "public"? They claim that it is an automatic guarantee of publicness. But I don't think so. In its own way it's a stylistic device that creates the image of publicness.

THRUSH: In their defense, I would say it makes publicness likelier to happen than some other alternatives. But when you polarize the debate as they do for marketing purposes, you deny the "everyday" success of a cul-de-sac suburb — which they've demonized.

CRAWFORD: Absolutely. Berkeley recently convened a conference on the New Urbanism, where Clare Cooper Marcus, who has done quite a lot of empirical work on suburban environments, stood up and said that her research showed that in fact cul-de-sacs encouraged community. And that people living on cul-de-sacs were very happy, and they wanted cul-de-sacs, and they all felt that they lived in an incredibly cohesive neighborhood. The New Urbanists had no answer to that. So a lot of claims about the connection between the environment and behavior are problematic. I was a lot more sympathetic to the New Urbanists in the early days, before they became so fixed on a standardized set of solutions for all situations. It's been successful from a marketing point of view, but they've lost a lot of the potential design nuances that they might have found by, say, compromising on the cul-de-sac and the grid, and working out something new. But by packaging their thinking in this either-or way, they've really reduced their usefulness.

THRUSH: As I tell my students, we need to make these issues central to the role of architecture and design in the world, if architecture is not going to go the way of poetry.

CRAWFORD: Ah, but now we have poetry slams, which have really brought poetry into the public arena. Poetry used to be considered a very private endeavor, communicated through the written word. Now people *perform* poetry — I think it's due to the influence of rap — and all of a sudden it's become extremely public. It demonstrates the fluidity of the concept of "public." You can find publicness in many, many different circumstances, both physical and social settings. You can actually often find more publicness in private things than in public things. And I don't necessarily regard something supplied by the state as public.

Even the notion of democracy is changing, and should change, and should be encouraged to change. If we talk about electoral democracy, everyone starts in on another narrative of loss, about lower voter turnouts and lack of interest. But other forms of democracy are emerging that haven't been recognized yet, and electoral democracy is really going to lose its power if it hasn't already. For me, a very exciting form of democracy is what you could call urban democracy, which focuses on life in the city, especially on the actual experiences of everyday life, of people who may not even be officially citizens, but who are urban residents. In the 19th century, people who were not American citizens could vote in municipal elections. So we already have this concept of the urban citizen, which is different from an "official" American citizen. And I think that that kind of urban citizenship really should be encouraged. Admittedly, urban politics is often an incoherent nightmare of struggle and complaints. But the cities are a cauldron of a new kind of democracy that has yet to emerge. ■■■



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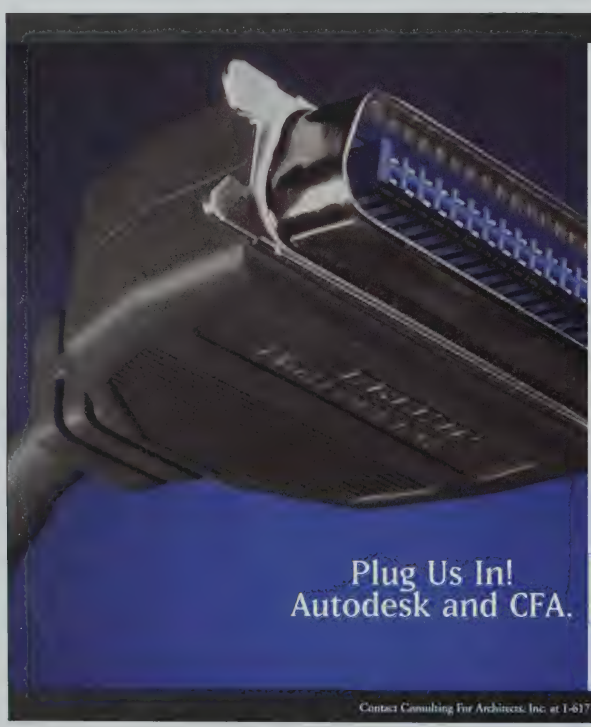


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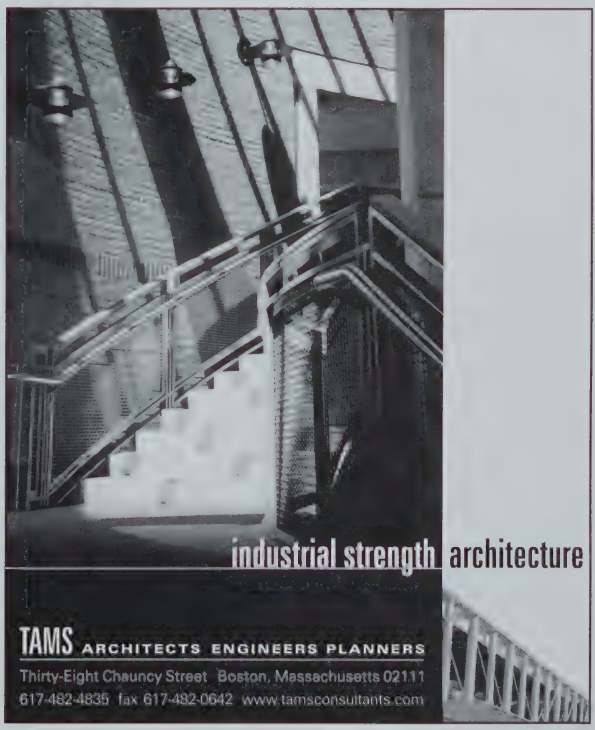
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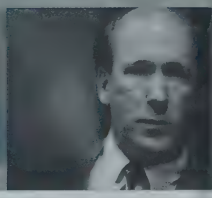
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Two Views:

by Harry Dodson ASLA



The current debate over future uses of the Central Artery, the seaport, and other open spaces in Boston brings up a number of interesting questions: How much open space can a city handle? Are American cities slowly evolving into urban office parks? Is Le Corbusier's scary vision of the city of the future — the "Ville Radieuse" of high-rise towers surrounded by parks (and parking lots) — finally becoming a reality even in Boston?

Efforts to reduce urban congestion have been going on since cities were first created, with varying degrees of success. More stable social conditions at the end of the Middle Ages and changes in military technology during the Renaissance saw the removal of the massive walls — "bulwarks" — that surrounded every major European city. The open spaces left by the removal of these huge fortifications were often transformed into the elegant boulevards that surround the core of many of today's European cities. History's most successful urban renewal project, the transformation of Paris by Baron Haussmann in the mid-19th century, grew out of an effort to rid the city of medieval congestion, bad air, lack of light, and poor sanitation.

Fighting urban congestion in the 20th century has been much less successful. We have become much better at removing density in city centers and much less adept at replacing it with useful, meaningful, and beautiful open spaces. As Prince Charles recently observed, urban renewal and highway construction projects in modern London have caused more damage and destruction than did the Luftwaffe during the Blitz. In the US, the situation is even more severe. The fight against urban congestion in Boston alone gave us the Central Artery "skyway" and the wind-swept expanse of City Hall Plaza.

Fortunately, citizen groups and preservationists have put a stop to the worst of this destruction. And recently, New Urbanist planners, designers, and developers have been attempting to bring density and traditional urban-design patterns back as a guiding force in rebuilding the damage wrought by the urban clearing trend of the past 50 years.

Yet we still face the real risk that our new open spaces will play second fiddle to the needs of the car. This risk is perhaps greatest in current plans for the Central Artery, where the design of the open spaces has been shaped by the need for traffic flow out of exit ramps, the inability to build over the depressed tunnel, and the need for wide surface streets to handle all the cars. The resulting open space could have more in common with a highway median strip than an urban park.

An alternative approach, based on the lessons of history and of great urban thinkers like Lewis Mumford, Jane Jacobs, and Ben and Jane Thompson, would be to restore urbanity to the Central Artery and seaport sites. They are, after all, at the very center of one of America's great cities. Urban spaces like Boston's Quincy Market or Post Office Square are dynamic because they have activity, density, human-scale architecture, and human-scale open spaces. In other words, they were designed for the use and enjoyment of people. People will not be attracted to a long, linear green swath bordering a busy six-lane highway, nor will they be attracted to a linear, windy, north-facing park, even if it does border the harbor. But people will be attracted to small urban parks surrounded by context-sensitive, mid-rise buildings with shops, restaurants, offices and residences — the age-old, tried-and-true formula for a successful urban environment. This is what we need to create over the depressed Central Artery and at the seaport. It makes urban-design sense and, in an era of dwindling public funding for open space, it makes economic sense, too. ■■■

Harry Dodson ASLA is a landscape architect and a principal in Dodson Associates in Ashfield, MA. He is co-author with Robert Yaro and Randall Arendt of *Dealing with Change in the Connecticut River Valley: A Design Manual for Conservation and Development* and has developed growth management plans for the Chicago and New York metropolitan regions.

Open space

by Patrice Todisco



trice Todisco is executive ector of the Boston eenSpace Alliance, a alition of organizations d individuals dedicated the protection, creation, re, and use of open ace for all. She holds a ster's degree in land- ape architecture.

In the midst of unprecedented opportunities to transform Boston's physical environment through the creation of extensive new open space, development discussions in the city have recently acquired a surreal quality. One of the most valued elements of urban life — public open space — is being cast as an under-performing asset that drains public coffers and erodes the urban fabric, a deleterious condition that should be minimized. This image has surfaced most recently in discussions about the Central Artery and the South Boston Waterfront, where incredible opportunities have been cast as potential liabilities.

With major public infrastructure projects underway in both the neighborhoods and downtown (including the Central Artery Surface restoration, the South Boston Waterfront, the Turnpike Air Rights, the Charles River Basin, the East Boston and Neponset River Greenways, and West Roxbury's Millennium Park), the current open-space system has the potential to expand by 25 percent. Viewed collectively, these individual projects will add significant aesthetic, environmental, social, and economic value to the city and region, defining the quality of life for Bostonians for years to come.

Yet, incredibly, instead of creating a cohesive and visionary plan for the future, local debate remains polarized and paralyzed by a discussion focused on management and maintenance, diverting attention from the issue at hand: The City of Boston has an opportunity to retain its viability as a world-class destination by acknowledging the value of an expanded open-space system to both residents and visitors.

There is much to be lost. Urban parks and open space leverage economic and commercial development, increase tourism, provide environmental benefits, and strengthen residential districts. Spending on parks and open spaces stimulates private investment and increases the value of surrounding properties. As the most overt manifestation of our democratic society, the parks and open spaces within our cities provide the outdoor rooms in which the character of our daily lives is shaped, regardless of ethnic background or socio-economic status. As an investment, there is no better way to enhance the city's livability than to support its parks and open spaces.

Commitment and leadership from the public sector are fundamental to the creation of great urban open spaces. Unfortunately, the lack of increased public support for the acquisition, management, and maintenance of public open space has led to an undue dependence on the largesse of the private sector. Along the South Boston Waterfront an unprecedented investment in the harbor and transportation infrastructure has led to the creation of 1,000 acres of prime real estate. However, there are no public dollars on the table to create a comparable public open-space system for the district. Without that system in place, development decisions cannot be made cohesively. To sustain large-scale, visionary open-space efforts, public interests must be matched with private development. In the waterfront district, this means that the open-space infrastructure should be secured for the entire area before individual developments advance.

With increased density comes the need for effective and efficient open space. This is as true for the South Boston Waterfront and the Central Artery as it is for Chinatown, where a half-acre of parkland serves 5,000 residents. With a citywide goal of 5 acres per thousand, the downtown neighborhoods are grossly underserved. A growing imbalance between the supply of available parkland, particularly for active recreation, and the demands made upon existing resources can be remedied only by continuing to acquire new open-space parcels.

Great cities are defined by their open spaces. Imagine Boston today without the Public Garden, Emerald Necklace, or Esplanade. Each of these places required bold planning and innovative solutions to difficult physical and financial problems. We must sustain this tradition and continue to move forward with the development of new parks and open spaces that will serve as our investment in the city's future. ■■■

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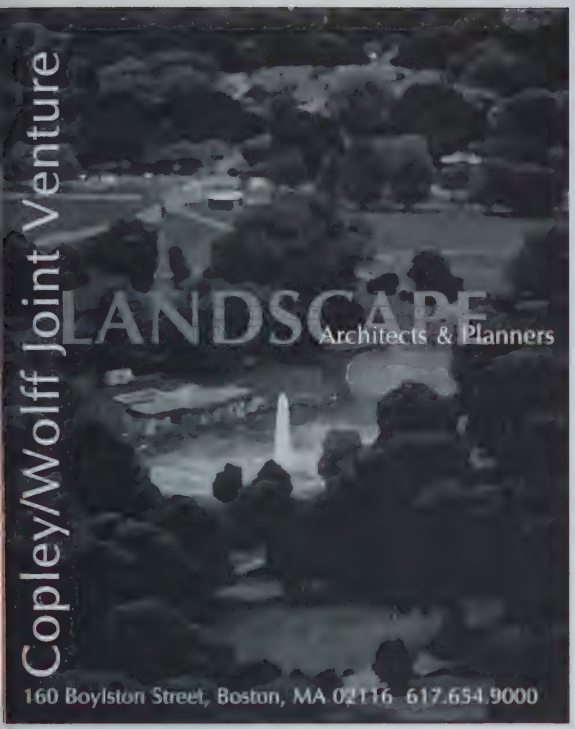
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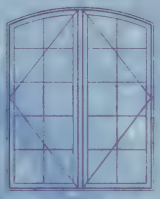
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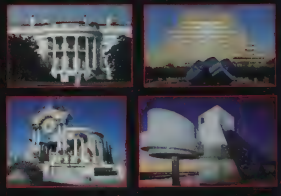
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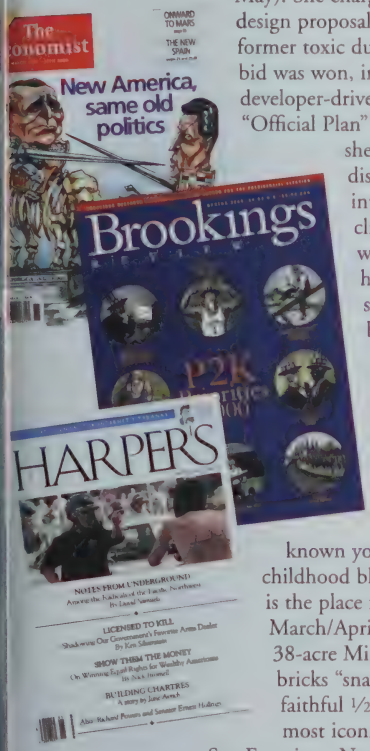
Covering the Issues

Periodical roundup

by Gretchen Schneider



An Olympian hoax?... "Let the spin begin!" declares Sharon Bender, in a brief but biting commentary on Australia's new Olympic Park (*Harper's*, May). She charges that the Greenpeace-inspired design proposals for the Sydney site — on a former toxic dump — were scrapped once the bid was won, in favor of more "bankable" developer-driven designs. By showing the "Official Plan" and highlighting what it omits, she illuminates the all-too-familiar discrepancies between "best intentions" and market/zoning/client realities — and the power of world-class public relations. It's hard to discern from this one-page story if we're about to be duped by a "green" media spin on an Olympic scale, or if — despite compromises — Sydney does showcase new models of clever brownfield re-use. These will be games to watch.



Kid at heart... Have you dreamed of being Godzilla? Or known your architect destiny since childhood blocks? Then Legoland, California, is the place for you. In "Model City," (*I.D.* March/April), Tom Vanderbilt visits this 38-acre Miniland — 20 million plastic bricks "snapped together into disarmingly faithful 1/20 scale reproductions of America's most iconic cities" — including New York, San Francisco, New Orleans, and Washington, DC. (Sorry, Boston.) It comes complete with everything from Lego Empire State to Lego fruit stands in Lego Chinatown to Lego bums slouched on Lego park benches under an expertly groomed bonsai landscape. Using only standard off-the-shelf parts, Miniland's model-builders layered Muppet-like humor with obscure structural knowledge and vast imagination. Even though it omits Lego suburbs, Vanderbilt suggests Miniland might "offer some lessons to real-world urban designers working in a postindustrial age in which cities are striving to reassert the power of place against formless suburban sprawl." And you thought Vegas was getting good.

It's everywhere... "In an era of traffic congestion, pollution, and diminishing green fields, new towns and suburbs have come to symbolize degradation instead of reconstruction and progress. As individuals, the British still usually aspire to a house and garden. As a group, they mourn the disappearance of the countryside." Sound familiar? In "Manage and Monitor," *The Economist* (March 11) highlights a new proposal from John Prescott, Britain's deputy prime minister and environmental planner-in-chief. Prescott seems to address the sentiments of the citizenry as well as the real need for new houses. His compromise housing plan sets construction rates between the disparate target rates debated by the real estate and conservation constituencies, requires 60 percent be built on recycled or brownfield sites, and shifts planning decisions from 20-year "predict and provide" models to a more finely adjustable five-year "manage and monitor" review. Tastes good and good for you? It just might be.

Sprawl watch, part two... The Spring 2000 *Brookings Review* identifies significant American policy issues for this "key election year" — and it seems that our perennial favorite — sprawl — has made the cut. In "Moving Beyond Sprawl," Bruce Katz and Amy Liu argue that the American sprawl debate has focused almost exclusively on symptoms of rapid growth, rarely mentioning underlying factors. In their seven-city study, Katz and Liu identify a fuller range of forces and challenge common assumptions, observing economic and residential metropolitan growth has been "highly uneven" and divisions do not follow traditional "city versus suburb" paradigms. Their conclusions are common sense: People move away from bad schools and to a house they can afford, regardless of its location on newly-paved-over-open-space or the then-necessary long commute times. These are connections between physical planning, social policy and the built environment that design professionals take for granted. Katz and Liu urge our nation's decision-makers to adopt a broader agenda and address these interrelated conditions with foresight, instead of reactionary Band-Aid solutions for sprawl symptoms. Bracketed between "A New Civil Rights Agenda" and "The 'Globalization' Challenge" of America's role in world trade, this article ranks significantly in *Brookings*' overall Y2K list. Is Al Gore still promoting "livable communities"? What about George W.? As the election approaches, the design professions should insist that built-environment issues stay in the campaign fore. ■■■

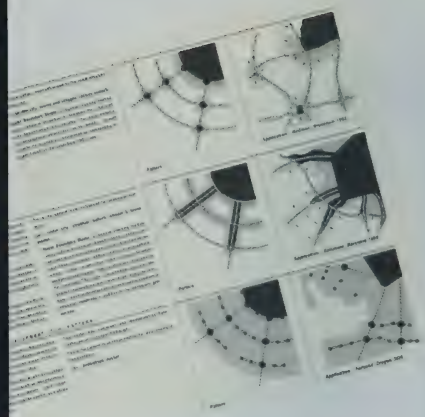
etchen Schneider
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ith College.

Books

The Lexicon of the New Urbanism

available from
Duany Plater-Zyberk & Co. (Miami)

Reviewed by Matthew J. Kiefer



The Lexicon of the New Urbanism, privately published by the leading New Urbanist design firm, Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company, is a curious work. A large-format workbook oriented toward the serious practitioner, it is curious in tone, content, format, and the circumstances of its creation.

Webster's Dictionary defines "lexicon" as "a word book or dictionary; the vocabulary of a particular language, field, social class, person, etc." Yet this *Lexicon* is more than that. Although the heart of it is an exposition of the vocabulary of the particular field of New Urbanism, it includes not just definitions, but also drawings, diagrams, and diatribes parsing every aspect of the New Urbanism and contrasting it with conventional suburban development. Its peculiar mixture of rationality and evangelism makes the work difficult to use and to evaluate.

The *Lexicon* represents, on the one hand, an impressive distillation of land-use practices and spatial relationships, ranging from the regional scale to the siting of individual buildings and parking spaces on their lots. For instance, the *Lexicon* describes regional growth patterns — such as the traditional "town and country" pattern, comprising a core city with outlying towns connected by rail and separated by a greenbelt; the "corridor and wedge" pattern, reflecting growth along radial streetcar lines; and the "transit-oriented development" pattern favored by New Urbanists Peter Calthorpe and Douglas Kelbaugh — tracing their historical evolution and giving examples of each. It similarly categorizes components of neighborhood structure ranging from rural to urban neighborhood types, and describing street and block patterns with references to historical examples, such as the street-grid-and-square pattern of Savannah, the radial-street pattern of Washington, DC, the idiosyncratic street plan of Nantucket, and the curvilinear blocks of Riverside, New York. Patterns of off-street parking, roadway geometry, and height-to-width ratio of streets and frontage arrangements are depicted and described with similar taxonomic rigor. In doing so, the *Lexicon* provides a conceptual framework, useful to the practitioner, for understanding and evaluating land-use patterns and practices.

The *Lexicon* also contains many lucid definitions of terms sometimes poorly understood by non-specialists. Definitions from transportation planning are particularly helpful, including not only more commonly used ones such as "level of service," "capture rate," and "vehicle miles traveled," but also such terms as "threshold gap" ("the distance from a pedestrian to an oncoming motor vehicle sufficient for 50 percent of pedestrians to choose to cross a thoroughfare"). It also explains terms coined, or at least popularized, by the New Urbanists such as "pedestrian shed" ("the distance which may be covered b a five-minute walk at an easy pace from the outer limit of the neighborhood to the edge of the neighborhood center") and "residual space" ("open space unassigned to either the private lot or to the designated public realm").

Yet, there is something deeply irritating about the *Lexicon.* Favored concepts are defined in terms so self-satisfied as to be almost meaningless. Neo-traditionalism is defined as "an ethos characterized by the pragmatic selection of available options." Other favored concepts, such as "smart growth" and "infill development," which did not originate with New Urbanist thinking, are appropriated by implication. Traditional neighborhood development (TND) is set up as the antidote to conventional suburban development (CSD), which is demonized. Terms related to CSD are defined, but then lightly crossed out, lest there be any confusion. Such disfavored concepts include not only "sprawl" but also "retirement community" and "enclave." The *Lexicon* ever defines "scarfing" ("to consume food while driving,"

hich, according to the *Lexicon*, "is a consequence f the inevitable allocation of discretionary time commuting in conventional suburbia"). "Joe uburban" is defined as "a common term for the ninformed participant in the public planning rocess, less active, but more responsive to educa- on than the NIMBY. Synonym: lumpen." Why ese definitions are necessary in a purportedly rious work is difficult to fathom. Other terms are eedlessly quantitative. "Inn" is defined as having o more than 12 rooms. "Cohousing" is defined as shared community of 12 to 24 units, which might me as a surprise to the residents of the 42-unit ichdale Cohousing Community in North ambridge, Massachusetts.

he work strays almost imperceptibly from aphically clear and well-presented diagrams of, for stance, alternative parking layouts and their plications for the public realm, to areas of social anning in which New Urbanists have no particular pertise or credibility. A chart summarizing the timum market housing mix by type in urban, burban, and rural areas, though purportedly based empirical evidence, fails to account for a host of cally variable factors which influence housing ix, including demographic trends, the quality of e local schools, income diversity, and proximity places of employment. In any case, it is not ear what is being optimized, other than the ew Urbanist desire to avoid suburban housing onoculture.

n outgrowth of a "Committee on Nomenclature" rmed at the second Congress for the New rbanism with Andres Duany and Stef Polyzoides co-chairs, the books lists 15 other principal ntributors. How such a collaborative (and esumably unpaid) effort became transmuted into work copyrighted by Duany Plater-Zyberk is a ory I am not privy to. The *Lexicon*'s introduction lls it a "work in progress" and says archly, that nyone may propose a change, which may or may t be accepted." A cynic might read this curious nguage in an expensive ($99) copyrighted work as attempt to garner more unpaid contributors d to insulate the work from criticism.

he *Lexicon* was issued by DPZ at roughly the same ne as their more mainstream (and much less pensive) book, *Suburban Nation: The Rise of rawl and the Decline of the American Dream*, hich has generally been well received. If *Suburban ation* is the retail version of New Urbanism, the xicon is more like its source code: the movement laid bare, without independent editorial intervention. As such, the *Lexicon* casts the movement into high relief, clarifying both its virtues and the hazards of its ambitions. For the *Lexicon* is not content merely to classify, instruct, and entertain (or exasperate); it reflects a deep concern with the implementation of the principles it articulates. In addition to announcing a certification process, the *Lexicon* recommends that its principles be implemented by six integrated codes governing the physical form of communities: an overall "regulating plan" and separate standards for the public realm, thoroughfares, architecture, landscape, and use. The result is an intensely regulated urban environment. The title page cites Archbishop Desmond Tutu's comment that "language does not just describe, it creates." Like the Modernism against which it rebels, the New Urbanism seems based on the notion that by articulating a rigorous set of design standards, we can make a better world. But the *Lexicon*'s — and the New Urbanism's — intensive reliance on codes gives this Modernist fallacy a new twist. Such private restrictions, once put in place, are notoriously difficult to amend, as anyone who has tried to get a majority vote of a condominium or homeowners' association for such momentous matters as changing the trash-disposal contractor well knows. This alone suggests that New Urbanist communities, guided by the *Lexicon* in their creation, are unlikely to change over time to acquire the layered, idiosyncratic richness that characterizes the "old urbanist" places they emulate. ■■■

Matthew J. Kiefer is a real-estate and land-use attorney at the 140-lawyer Boston firm of Goulston & Storrs.

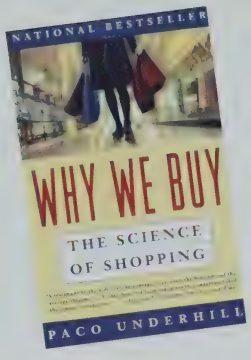


Why We Buy: The Science of Shopping

by Paco Underhill

Touchstone Press, 2000 (paperback edition)

Reviewed by
James P. Batchelor AIA



Most of us are buyers; some of us might even claim to be expert shoppers. So it is inevitable that readers will begin this book with many personal preconceptions. To his credit, Paco Underhill takes an engaging, practical, not overblown — and he would emphasize "scientific" — look at the topic: why we buy.

Underhill's vantage point is firmly grounded in the physical world. A former apprentice to urban anthropologist William H. Whyte (author of *The Organization Man* and *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*), he carries forward Whyte's methodology of patient observation of the everyday world in order to develop understanding of the influence of the physical world on our daily lives. At a time when would-be prophets speak in hyperbolic terms about the "commoditization of the service economy" and the radical newness (read, impending oldness) of the "experience economy," Underhill's words come across as a warm breeze rather than hot air.

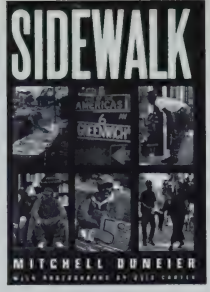
Underhill has agendas of his own. It is hard not to feel that the book is written with an eye toward touting the success of his own consulting business (Envirosell; note that he did not name it "Envirobuy"). After multiple tales of his successful recommendations to his impressive client list, the reader could worry that we shoppers may become victims of Underhill or other specialists who can successfully use science and design to sell us things we don't need or want.

Few of us, however, go into a store because we don't *want* to buy something. Underhill consistently grounds his points in direct observation of the experience of shopping — looking, reaching, touching, smelling — and the often frustrating and anti-climatic transaction of buying: waiting in line, paying, and enduring the guilt. The result is that it is possible to respect if not wholeheartedly agree to his claim to be working to achieve a "public improvement" as well as an "economic payoff."

Architecture is often plagued by a superabundance of assertions and a shortage of actual research with hard data. Underhill's research methods are those of a social scientist: painstakingly tracking shoppers, restaurant-goers, and other denizens of the extended retail world. The result is a must-read for store designers and for anyone interested in making public places more user-friendly and more rewarding. Read this book if you are a shopper who would like to form your own opinion about the extent to which you are being helped or manipulated by the "science of shopping."

Underhill's insights have much to offer as we strive to understand how the design of an environment can influence human behavior. As he points out, stores and museums are both in the business of displaying objects, but retailers are far ahead of museums when it comes to tactile or sensory exploration. Maybe that's why most of us spend more time in shops than in museums. ■■■

James P. Batchelor AIA is a principal of Arrowstreet, Inc. in Somerville, MA.



Sidewalk

By Mitchell Duneier, with photographs by Ovie Carter

Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999

Reviewed by
Lawrence Bluestone AIA

Panhandlers, trash scavengers, homelessness, drug addictions, poverty, racism, class conflicts, police harassment, and socially unacceptable behavior: All these phenomena live side-by-side with hope, pursuit of respect, and even entrepreneurial ingenuity on the sometimes mean streets and public sidewalks of many American cities. This is the demi-world through which many of us pass tangentially every day, but about which few of us really know. It's also the world of New York's homeless sidewalk secondhand book vendors on Sixth Avenue in Greenwich Village — a world into which author and sociologist Mitchell Duneier sympathetically leads us, and then guides us out again.

It's often not a pretty world. It's a world in which middle-class sensibilities and underclass behavior collide — causing unease in daily sidewalk encounters between the Village's residents and the homeless black men who hawk their scavenged books and magazines at their sidewalk tables. It's a world of daily struggle, drug addiction, and police harassment. And yet it's also a world in which — through their "honest" entrepreneurial labors — these sidewalk vendors gain self-respect, strive for a measure of economic subsistence, and attempt to stay attached to "normal society."

Duneier, however, is not content with simply describing the plight of these men who inhabit the same Greenwich Village streets a those described by Jane Jacobs 30 years ago in her seminal work *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. He also wants t influence public policy. In *Death and Life*, Jacobs argued that our streets were kept safe by the constant daily presence of "publ characters" and their "eyes on th street."

Duneier asserts his own updated version of Jacobs' theories by attempting to credit today's sidewalk vendors with the same beneficent "public characters" ro fulfilled 30 years ago by shop-keepers and merchants. He then contrasts that potentially positiv role with the popular "broken windows" theory of public disorder enforced today by New York City's Giuliani admin istration, and increasingly by other big-city mayors throughou the country. According to this theory, at the first sign of social breakdown, physical deteriora-tion, or degradation in the quality of life, the offending influences — whether broken windows, graffiti, the homeless, or street vendors — should be removed in order to discourage an environment that supports further deterioration and crime. And so, under Giuliani's wildly popular "quality of life" police enforcement campaign, Sixth Street's vendors are harassed, the vending tables removed, and life made otherwise difficult for them. When we remove the vendor, do we also remove those "eyes on the street"?

When it comes to introducing u sympathetically into the world of these street hustlers, the auth succeeds brilliantly. When it comes to persuading us of the correct public policies to pursue he is less convincing. In either case, for Duneier's readers, our cities' sidewalks will never quite be the same. ■■■

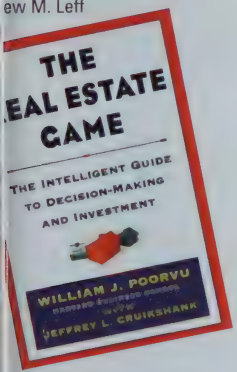
Lawrence Bluestone AIA is a principal of the Bluestone Planning Group in Cambridge, MA.

he Real Estate Game: he Intelligent Guide Decision-Making nd Investment

William J. Poorvu with
ffrey L. Cruikshank

ee Press, 1999

viewed by
ew M. Leff



ave you been sitting on the lelines over the last few years, tching your associates making all — or probably large — tunes as real-estate investors or velopers? Those of us who can member back a dozen years ago ow that similar developers d investors lost fortunes, their mes, and the shirts off their cks for good measure. The me of real-estate investment d development is complicated, tentially lucrative and satisfy-g, but risky. How does one ing the pieces together, play the ht cards, collect the money, d have fun at the game, too?

illiam Poorvu, who heads the l-estate program at the rvard Business School and is a cessful real-estate investor d developer himself, has, with frey Cruikshank, written an ellent guide to the real-estate estment process. Buying, lding, and selling real estate is nplicated because of the large mber of variables involved. hat is the property worth when u purchase it? What improve-nts are needed to get the most of it? What will it cost to erate the property and what income can be expected in the future? Where will the capital markets be when you go to finance and what financing risks are you willing to take? What will happen to the marketplace, political environment, and other external factors during your ownership? How do you determine whether it's better to continue to hold rather than sell? One can easily get bogged down in trying to weigh these and other factors. Poorvu has organized his book around a game that helps to bring structure to and promote understanding of the investment and development process.

The game is sometimes forced, and the authors deviate from it frequently. But they bring overall clarity to the interrelationships between the various elements of the investment decision. Their style is straightforward. They introduce the reader to the "back-of-the envelope" method of analyzing a project before taking on anything more sophisticated. The war stories that Poorvu relates help bring the issues to life.

This book is invaluable for both the new investor wanting to learn to play the game successfully and those in related professions who need to understand how decisions are made about buying, leasing, renovating or developing buildings. The book goes beyond just buying and selling existing buildings. There is an excellent chapter on the development process. The experienced investor will appreciate the war stories and the advice and will find some of the checklists useful.

Reading this book may help architects understand why their clients are so difficult about budgets and schedules. But it will also help all you sideline-sitters understand why you just might want to try your own hand at development…or why you just might not! ■■■

Drew M. Leff is a principal of GLC Development Resources in Boston.

The Global Soul: Jet Lag, Shopping Malls, and the Search for Home

by Pico Iyer

Alfred A. Knopf, 2000

Reviewed by
James McCown

Years ago, a cartoon in *The New Yorker* poked fund at Americans' breezy informality and general cultural naïveté: At a UN reception, two perplexed diplomats stare as an American chirps, "Whereabouts in Africa are you folks from?"

Now the words "multicultural" and "global" are ubiquitous. Against this backdrop, Pico Iyer has written *The Global Soul: Jet Lag, Shopping Malls, and the Search for Home*. What does "culture" mean in a world of T1 Internet connections and supersonic travel? And what and where is "home"?

By setting the book in venues where cultures clash — airports, Olympic events, multi-ethnic cities — Iyer attempts to paint his vision of the "global soul," someone who transcends borders, ethnicities, and languages and holds a passport to the world. Camping at Los Angeles International Airport, he offers anecdote after endless anecdote — "Guards chattering in Tagalog while passengers fret in Hindi..." — but little interpretation of what it all means.

He focuses on Toronto and Atlanta and their evolutions into "world-class" cities, or at least world-class wannabes. Multi-ethnic Toronto is presented as the great *tabula rasa*, a place where "Canadian nationality itself is no more than a minor social perquisite, like a driver's license or a spare pair of glasses." During the 1996 Olympics he spends weeks in Atlanta, concluding that it is a "forest in search of a city," a clean, polite place of pristine malls and office parks which nonetheless seethes with racial animosity. As a former Atlantan, one who still marvels at the city's livability and relative racial harmony, I take exception to this.

The poet William Sharp said, "My heart is a lonely hunter that hunts on a lonely hill." Today we hunt not just for romance, but for our place in the world. We have a deep need for roots, but are tantalized by the prospect of inventing ourselves anew, even in a distant land. Few things are more passionate than this search, but Iyer's writing is oddly devoid of passion. At no point did I feel swept up in his journey. We hear little about his parents, his childhood, or what emotional forces launched him on his quest. And when he describes the beautiful city of Oxford, England, as a "grimy, everyday industrial town," then sings the praises of his adopted home, a Japanese suburb filled with tacky, co-opted American popular culture, you begin to question his judgment.

And nowhere does he address patriotism. Sir Walter Scott spoke of another soul, one of the decidedly non-global kind, when he said: "Breathes there the man with soul so dead, who never to himself hath said, 'This is my own, my native land!'" So, whither love of country? For answers to this and other issues facing all of us global souls, we'll have to look beyond Pico Iyer's book. ■■■

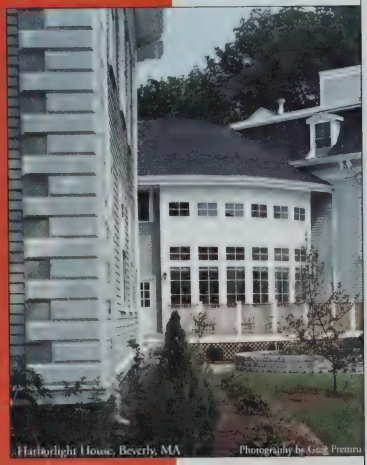
James McCown is director of communications at Moshe Safdie and Associates Architects in Somerville, MA.



Bergmeyer

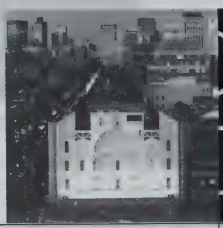
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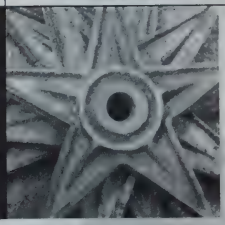


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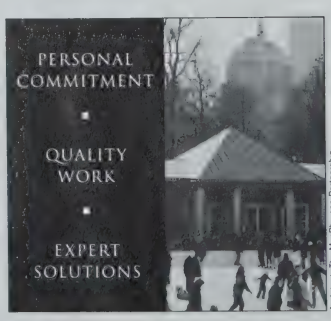


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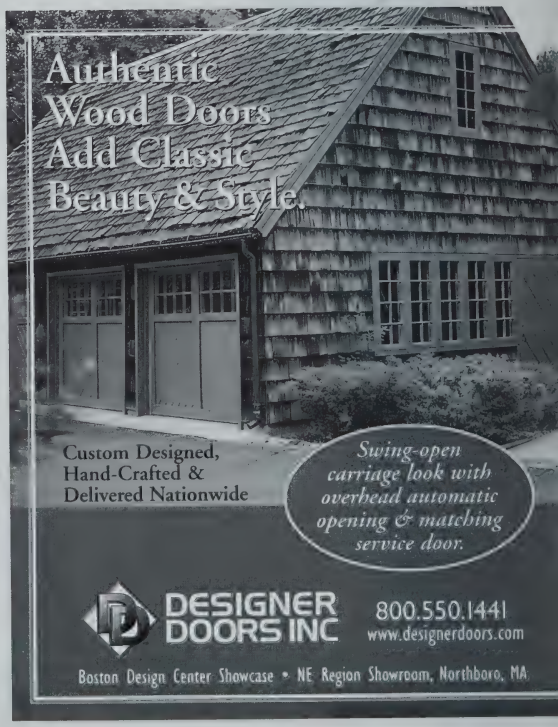
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Site Work

Web sites of note

Boston Society of Architects "Barometer"

www.architects.org/seaport/

The Barometer "seeks to forecast what is coming" by using computer-generated images to evaluate development proposals for the seaport district.

Center for Urban and Regional Policy (Northeastern University)

www.curp.neu.edu

Someone ought to give these guys an award for understanding and exploiting the true potential of the Web. Part information resource, part 'zine, CURP's site has pulled together a community of people who care about urban issues by promoting discussion and presenting information that's actually useful.

Millennium Green

www.millenniumgreen.usda.gov

The new millennium's here — what have you done about it lately? The feds suggest you start planting; the goal is to have one million "millennium gardens" by 2001. Go to the Web site to hear the official national theme song.

Public Open Space and Dogs

www.petnet.com.au/openspace/frontis.html

"A design and management guide for open space professionals and local government." An earnest (and completely serious) guide to offering public-space access "for all members of the community," promoting "pet management strategies." Great idea. We're waiting for the sequel on human management strategies.

The Foundation Center

www.fdncenter.org

"Your gateway to philanthropy on the World Wide Web." Foundation links, addresses, and requests for proposals. Maybe some foundation wants to give *you* money — it sure would look a lot more respectable on the c.v. than Publishers Clearinghouse.

Boston Main Streets

www.bostonmainstreets.com

Based on a National Trust program, Boston Main Streets is "the first urban, multi-district Main Streets program in the nation." Call for the BMS guidebook, "Beyond Baked Beans."

Salty New England Web Cams

www.maineharbors.com/camindex.htm

In the waning days of summer, this is definitely a mental-health link. Click to cams in some of your fave waterfront communities, including Hyannis, P'town, Newport, and Nantucket; check out the traffic on the Bourne bridge. Lobstercam, set inside a lobster trap (scenes "will be dark at night"), is a cult favorite, though Mystic Aquarium's Dolphin Cam and the Giant Ocean Tank Cam at the New England Aquarium are real contenders.

We're always looking for intriguing Web sites, however mysterious the connection to architecture. Send your candidates to: epadjen@architects.org

Castle Island in South Boston

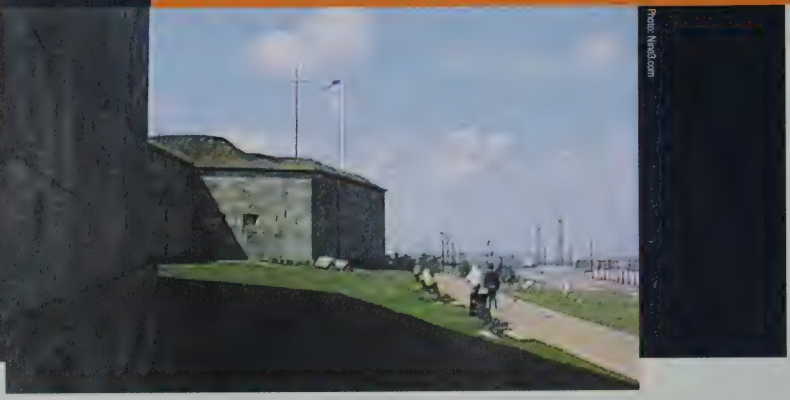


Photo: Nimo3.com

The moment I first arrived at Castle Island, I felt a kind of atavistic stirring which took some while to understand. I grew up in land-locked central Iowa, where references to water were figurative — a sea of prairie grass, an ocean of grain — and where the largest body of it on our home place was the 50-gallon drinking tank in a corner of the pig lot. As a boy, I vacationed with my parents maybe two or three times on a lake in the northern part of the state. It was called Clear Lake, and I see it in my mind as a blue-gleaming astonishment of nature, though I suspect it deserves nothing much more than its humble name: Clear.

Perhaps you know, as I did not, that Castle Island is not an island, but the peninsular extreme of an almost symmetrically perfect C-shaped extension of the South Boston waterfront. Perhaps you also know there's no castle. Instead, atop the lovely low hill that dominates the park sits a huge stone fortress, squatting gray and featureless. Its flat top is incongruously covered, whether by design or from neglect, with the same high green grass as the hill on which it resides, which made it look, on a bright summer day with the wind blowing steadily, as if it were sporting a dyed, punk hair cut. Or as if several acres of, well, Iowa, had been shipped in to serve as a kind of natural roof.

There were a few sunbathers dotting the hillside but the great majority had set up down below on the concrete area next to the parking lot. Surrounded by reclining sun worshipers, one older man sat totemically, serene as a buddha and shaped like one, his tan hide looking as if he rubbed it hourly with a walnut wood stain.

I bought a small box of first-rate French fries at Sullivan's, the park's single concessionaire, and followed the encircling path. And it was then that I began to sense why Castle Island felt familiar to me. In the course of walking the full loop, I noticed several memorials — a monument to a master shipbuilder; a fishing pier named for a lost firefighter; the children's playground named for still another fireman. These are moving tributes, faithfully maintained, but what impressed me was their modesty of scale and design. And from that I realized that the park as a whole gave off the same impression. Of modesty. Of wonderfully unschooled design. It's the same instinctive modesty that defines the Midwest I grew up in, a place constitutionally averse to putting on airs. It was the spirit of Castle Island that was familiar to me. And once I understood that, everything made sense. As for instance, the great circle of water around which Castle Island wraps. It is called Pleasure Bay. Not Paradise or Grande. Pleasure Bay.

Clear Lake. Pleasure Bay.

Castle Island is an extraordinarily beauti spot, all of Boston panoramically offerec up. Perhaps, recognizing the surroundin spectacle, those who've made and maintained the park understand, as a Midwesterner would, that there's no nee for grand gardens or fastidiously barbere lawns. It's as if it were kept up by a grou of neighborhood volunteers, planting a bush here, another over there, and mow the grass when they get around to it. Which they always do.

It's as if Castle Island were someone's ba yard. Which is exactly the case. It's been South Boston's back yard, and like so much about this intensely proud and private part of Boston, there's much tha good and much that's problematic in th parochial claim the neighborhood has made on Castle Island. What's good is t very modesty that feels no need to dress its prized place for outsiders. What's problematic, of course, is the same thin South Boston's historic complaint again outsiders.

And as the city's waterfront gets settled, matter what that finally means, outside are certainly on their way.

Leaving, I looked back for a last glimps and imagined the great grim walls of th fortress tucked and repointed and made into a kind of Faneuil Hall. This made sad. And then, as I was getting into my I saw a white couple leading five black up the walk toward the beach. I knew t was an easy and obvious scene to make emblematic, but it made me think nevertheless that maybe South Boston's surely altered future has already begun be its vibrant present. ■■■

Douglas Bauer is the author of three novels and two works of nonfiction. His most recent book is the nove *The Book of Famous Iowans.*

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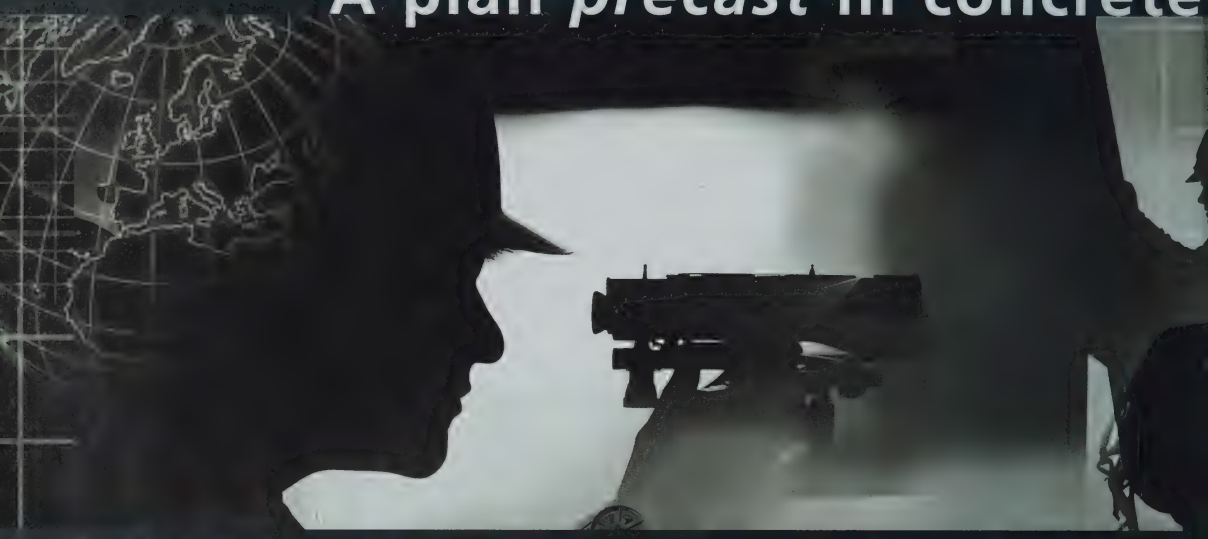
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Design

These days, it's hard to talk about new directions in design without jumping almost immediately into a discussion of materials. Indeed, a rekindled interest in the material aspect of building is one of the biggest shifts in architecture over the last 15 years. Titanium is to the New Modernism what Dryvit was to Post-Modernism.

This "Design" issue of *ArchitectureBoston* focuses on materials and craft — the tangible aspects of architecture. In architect-speak, "craft" suggests the method and care with which materials are joined. "Craft" is also a handy marketing term for retailers trying to satisfy the growing consumer appetite for do-it-yourself projects, Arts and Crafts furniture reproductions, and artisan-wares found in trendy boutiques. Today's Home Depot shoppers speak knowledgeably about varieties of granite and ponder the relative virtues of cherry and mahogany. Madonna had it only half right — we are material girls *and* boys.

We demand a lot from building materials — to keep weather out, to protect us from fire, to conserve energy, as well as to convey social, cultural, and aesthetic messages. New materials and technologies are pushing design boundaries. Some of us are confident that we are on the cusp of creating an ever-richer environment; others worry that our computer manipulations of materials will engender a more precipitous rush to an immaterial world of sensory deprivation.

There is a gee-whiz aspect to the current coupling of materials and technology. British architect Alan Short notes that "modern technology is invisible," suggesting that the much-admired high-tech aesthetics of architects like Nicholas Grimshaw and Richard Rogers are downright bizarre. Short need not worry — the high-tech look is really a tarting-up of old-fashioned building technologies, soon to be seen as quaintly anachronistic as Art Deco. With the construction of Bilbao, high-tech became low-tech.

It is not too soon to worry about the insidious long-term influence of Frank Gehry. Is every city and town in America — or given this global economy, in the world — prepared to meet the onslaught of undulating metal walls that will infest their communities once every architect has access to the same technology? However brilliant Bilbao may be, all great ideas are snatched up by the marketplace and driven to cliché. Gehry himself seems to be bent on "branding" Bilbao, turning a masterpiece into a style, inviting down-market imitation.

Computer technologies have liberated designers from long-standing constraints. Sudden freedom can foster an exhilarating "Look, Ma, no hands!" confidence. But sudden freedom can also promote reckless joy-riding — adolescent behavior without regard to social or civic responsibility. "Because I can" is frequently a motivation without rationale or merit.

Like the new blender that leads us to foist dreadful concoctions on unwitting guests before it is put on a shelf to await a more appropriate use, new materials and computer-aided design technologies will inevitably lead to acts of willful caprice and outright imposition. Let's hope the gleeful exuberance that is about to be visited upon us passes quickly, giving way to deliberation and sophistication. Only then will the new technologies contribute to truly meaningful innovation.

Elizabeth S. Padjen FAIA
Editor

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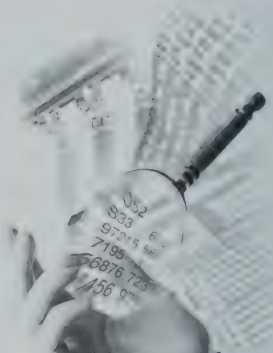
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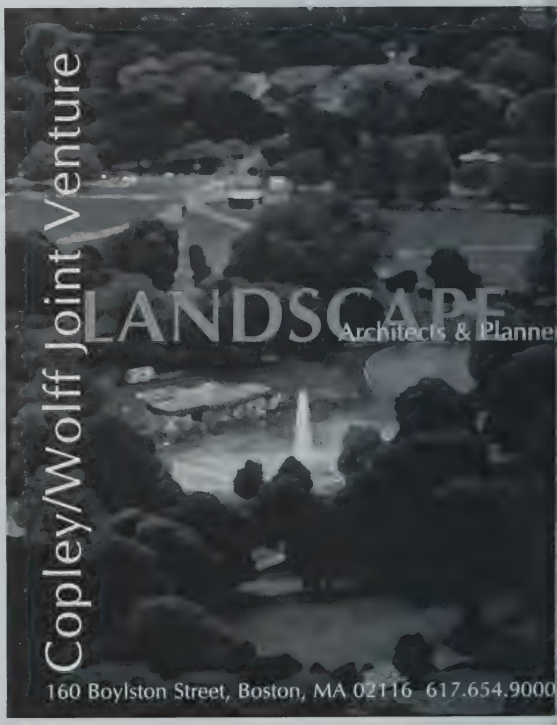
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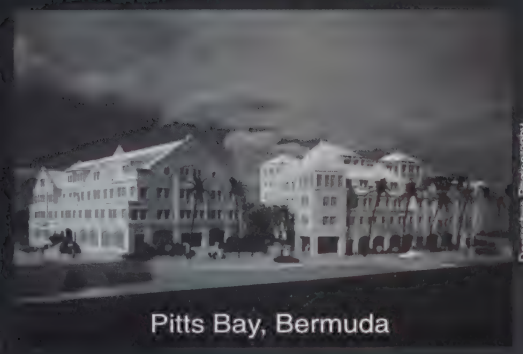
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Letters

Despite 20-plus years of a steady stream of predictions about the "the office of the future," (Summer 2000) we seem determined to remain always on the brink of discovering the new office. In the absence of understanding what the "new" office actually is, we hold on to the notion that it is a phenomenon yet to be realized. Our dialogue is almost all based on what it is not — i.e. "cubicleland."

In fact, the new office is already here. If you have a portable computer, cell phone, voice mail or e-mail, you are already there. New technology has forever liberated us from the notion that our place of work is a simple-minded all-purpose office or cubicle.

The snag is that those of us who create and provide work environments have not yet provided many real alternatives that support this shift. A few notorious and spectacularly unsuccessful forays into building the "new" office have made us just plain suspicious. The Chiat/Day project in New York City of several years ago is the prime example. Although it succeeded at what the Chiat organization does best (garnering a huge amount of attention in the media), it failed miserably as a place to work. It was recently dismantled and replaced with a traditional workstation-based plan.

So what might a solution be? I would assert that it involves a re-integration and coordination of the disciplines that have drifted apart since the introduction of the cube in the 1960s. Real alternatives are possible only if they involve the right stakeholders in the process of creating and managing them. "New" offices must be planned, designed, built, and operated by teams that include all of the stakeholders — senior managers; human resource, information technology, and finance managers; and the end users — with facilities managers acting as integrators.

As for our professions ? The current set-up is bleak. The opportunities are enormous but require a re-tooling unlike anything we have ever experienced before. As it stands, developers want to build the biggest possible floorplates with the least amount of exterior detail, surface area, and money so that the burden of use — and cost — is all on the tenant. Planning boards have backed into strange and defensive land-use density formulas and bargaining. Architects barely hold on by embellishing the flat skins of overscaled boxes and supposedly coordinating the technocrats who "engineer" them with inefficient and inflexible systems. Contractors negotiate value-engineered (i.e., a little less money for a lot less work) projects and build them at the mercy of subcontractors who are locked into a rigidly limited set of generic building materials and trades. Interior design has been reduced to a commodity not unlike fast food, mostly produced by a few large and generic organizations. (Just how many ways ar there to redesign a hamburger?) Most furniture and interior systems manufacturers are trying t figure out what their competition is going to d next so that they can copy it by the next Neocon trade show. How much more squiggly can we make worksurfaces and how anthropoi will a chair have to be before it attacks its user: And who in this bloated food chain is actually providing value? Does any of this really make the worker more effective? Is it really a wonder that most people don't like their work environments?

If architects and interior designers keep providing less value with each step we take, we will rightfully disappear. We are the weakest and easiest-to-drop link in the food chain. Despite popular opinion, my experience is that — although it may at times be fun — innovation is painful, hard work. Re-inventing the systems, tools, and processes for how we create and provide work environments will require that we dismantle what we are now.

The good news is that by learning to re-invent and re-integrate, we might actually come up with truly "new" ways to make and manage work environments that increase value, are more efficient, help workers be more effective, and that people even like to work in. We really don't have a choice. The "new" office is already here. Can we see it?

Robert Luchetti AIA
Cambridge, MA

The roundtable discussion on the planning and development of the Seaport district (Fall 2000) offered some of the most insightful and thoughtful perspectives on the issue to date. Although the participants offered many points around which the debate must ultimately turn, several specific observations in my mind are over-arching.

The first is whether or not this process is to "be dominated by the politics of the 20th century or the radically changed demographics and cultural shifts in the city that represent Boston in the 21st century." Equally important is the need for a clear statement of the public's interest in the waterfront and a corresponding commitment from the Commonwealth, the Mayor, and the Boston Redevelopment Authority to protect that interest for future generations.

I would also add that these two points beg for a more inclusive definition of the "public." As Ted Landsmark points out, too "much of the discussion has occurred in very small rooms." The opportunity to redevelop this extraordinary resource has been made possible by the investment of substantial amounts of public dollars and will undoubtedly require more. These are taxpayer dollars contributed from all of the city's neighborhoods and beyond. Consequently, I believe the Seaport district should be envisioned within the context of Boston's larger civic realm rather than from a neighborhood perspective. Its planning should reflect that in the land uses that, are proposed (perhaps a ballpark?)and in its relationship to the Central Artery surface, the Common, the Southwest Corridor, the Esplanade, Franklin Park and the Emerald Necklace. The planning of the district should maximize, not minimize, public access, particularly through improved transit and bicycle connections as well as water-borne linkages.

Former city councilor Tom Keane suggests that the choice is between two visions of Boston — as a city of neighborhoods or as one unified city. He cites the "seemingly slight issue like changing the name of this district from 'the Seaport' to 'the South Boston Waterfront' as a perfect example" of the conflict between the two visions.

I suggest that the issue is not slight at all — it is huge! It is the first place for those in charge to establish that the Seaport belongs to us all and not to just one neighborhood. The conscious use of the term "district" is equally important. Where is it written that it must be a new "neighborhood"? The term neighborhood, particularly in Boston, implies territoriality and insularity in ways that need to change in the new century. "District," on the other hand, implies a precinct that is much more inclusive.

Boston doesn't need more neighborhoods; it needs more shared places in the city where the residents of all neighborhoods can find common purpose — places to celebrate, to recreate, and to mourn together. The Seaport district should first be that kind of place and its underlying design principles should reinforce that objective.

We can start by engaging a much broader constituency in a dialog to develop a shared vision for the waterfront that addresses immediate concerns and realities but not at the expense of the long-term future. We must then muster the political will and make the necessary public investments, as the panel suggests, to send the very clear message to the private sector that if you choose to develop here there are very clear rules of engagement.

In the final analysis, the Seaport district should *first* become a fantastic amenity with generous open spaces and public facilities that invite the entire city. With that goal firmly established, it should *then* be thought of as a place to live and work — not in the reverse order.

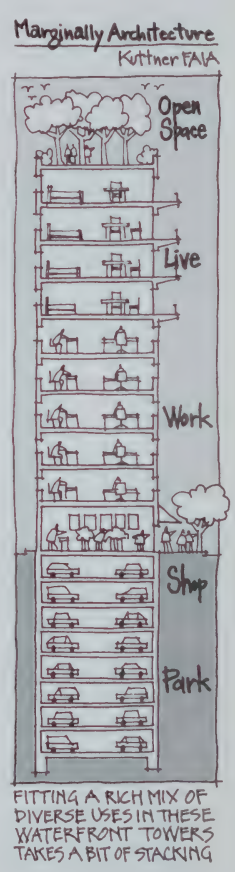
M. David Lee FAIA
Boston

Robert Yaro and Julia Koster's "Last Chance for the First Colony" (Fall 2000) calls for saving southeastern Massachusetts by creating a vision, establishing a 14-municipality rural reserve, promoting regional planning, designating growth centers, initiating transfers-of-development-rights, coordinating groups, protecting water, developing brownfield-ecotourism-agricultural incentives, and inventing regional home rule. These are all worthwhile activities, but they should not be priorities.

To seriously make a difference in how municipalities in southeastern Massachusetts and elsewhere plan, zone, and permit development, we need first to make fundamental changes to our rules of engagement — the Massachusetts Subdivision Control Law and the State Zoning Act. These developer/realtor-friendly, ancient Beacon Hill strictures significantly hinder local governments from creating the communities they deserve and desire. We call upon the legislature to start the re-write this year.

Massachusetts is a commonwealth whose local governments are largely an untrained and uncompensated citizens' army. Volunteer planning boards, conservation commissions, boards of health, school committees, and many boards of selectmen make critical day-to-day decisions that have huge implications for our environment, neighborhoods, and schools. With a new set of rules from the legislature, liberated municipalities can revise their play books and begin to create and implement their own visions within a progressive state-wide framework. Only then will they be prepared to cooperate with each other around a shared set of innovative regional principles. To paraphrase Yaro and Koster, we need to act locally before we can think regionally.

Jack Clarke
Massachusetts Audubon Society
Lincoln, MA



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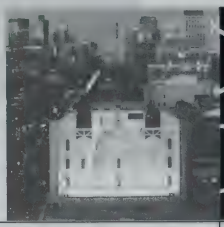


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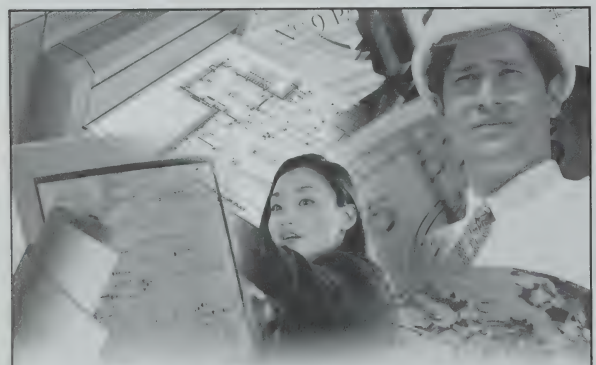


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Material World

Our roundtable participants recently discussed the many ways architects think about materials, from new technologies to the role of ornament.

PARTICIPANTS

Kimo Griggs is the principal of JKSG Architects, Inc. and Kimo Incorporated, a design and fabrication company in Somerville, MA. He teaches building technology at the Harvard Graduate School of Design.

Kyna Leski is a principal of Studio 360 in Providence, RI, and is an associate professor at the Rhode Island School of Design.

Paul Martini is the president of A.J. Martini, general contractors based in Malden, MA, and a past president of the Associated General Contractors of Massachusetts.

Henry Moss AIA is a principal of Bruner/Cott & Associates in Cambridge, MA, and is chair of the BSA Historic Resources Committee.

Elizabeth Padjen FAIA is editor of *ArchitectureBoston*.

Marco Steinberg is an assistant professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, where his research focuses on materials and fabrication technology.

Theodore Szostkowski AIA is a principal of Kallmann McKinnell & Wood Architects in Boston.

Nader Tehrani is a principal of Office dA in Boston and is an assistant professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Design.



Interfaith Chapel, Northeastern University
Office dA

Padjen: One year ago, *ArchitectureBoston* ublished a discussion about the future architecture of ie Seaport district in Boston. It was deliberately not conversation about planning and urban design sues, but about the architecture — the character of ie buildings. People talked a lot about design in mbolic terms that were really discussions about aterials. And that suggests that materials have come a kind of shorthand — that we consciously oose materials to represent certain ideas.

recently served on a design-awards jury in Portland, regon. It was fascinating to see a range of projects a region that does not have the strong historic ntext that we have here in Boston. The result is an chitecture that is largely dependent on materials d craft — the innovative expression and juxta- sition of materials. It made for some wonderful ildings, buildings that were inventive and vigorous ways that I have to say some Boston buildings are t. Admittedly, it may be simplistic to suggest that ere's a correlation between historic context and aterial invention — especially since I firmly believe at architects who work directly with historic uctures frequently represent cutting-edge thinking out materials. They frequently have the greatest chnical knowledge, because they see how materials have over time and they are often in the position of aking repairs or finding new materials that will rk in conjunction with the old. It requires thinking a broad way about the meaning and behavior of aterials.

ston does of course have a number of firms that are own for their sophistication in material and craft. also turns out that we have a number of young chitects and young firms that are interested in these ues and are at the forefront of investigating ways integrating them with new technologies.

Szostkowski: I am struck by the presence in this scussion of so many faculty members who are aching materials — it reminds me of how little posure we had to these issues when I was in school the '70s and '80s. I'd like to offer three anecdotes at describe how architects relate to materials. The st one: I often ask new interns about their moment epiphany — the moment when they first knew ey wanted to become an architect. An MIT aduate recently answered, "I know exactly when it ppened. I was nine years old. My parents were ilding an apartment for my grandfather. I can still member the smell of the concrete and the sawdust." is is a wonderful story to me, because he had ained a sensuous memory of the materials — eir smell.

The second story is of a famous detailer who worked for Mitchell Giurgola. This guy would gather the new interns around his table, put on his apron, and pull out a construction drawing, which he would then mask off so you could see only one detail showing a joint between a brick and a piece of stone. And then he would take out an actual brick and piece of stone and show that detailing is the bringing together of two materials. This guy became a legend in the office — young interns would follow him around. One day, they tracked him down to his house and there he was, taking apart his Porsche. Had it laid out on a velvet rug. He discovered a joy in the tactility and presence of materials, in taking things apart and putting them back together, that was very tangible. And it was expressed in the way he taught his students.

The third story is about the assemblage of things. Clarence Blackall, the famous Boston theater architect, designed the Tremont Temple based on the Doge's palace in Venice. He laid out the entire façade on the ground to study the effect of the actual stones compared to what he had laid out in the drawing. He climbed up a tower and had his workmen move things around as he looked down at it all on a cloudy day, a sunny day, and a rainy day. He had a complete involvement and preoccupation with the presence of materials.

These stories counter what we're experiencing in the profession. There's great anxiety about incoming architects who are very CAD-proficient, but who don't have a sense of tactility or an ability to work with materials, select materials, or make judgments about materials.

Griggs: Marco and I teach a course, an introduction to building technology, that is a required course for every first-term student. It's part of the core curriculum. We're trying to address those very issues. I agree with Elizabeth that architects who are working with historic buildings often have a better sense of structure and a natural affinity for materials. And that is because when you take apart an old building, you understand it. You undress it. You learn that choices were based on very practical considerations. Most of the cuts were straight, for example, because angles cost more money because they take more time and more physical cutting energy. People who work on historic buildings often have a sense of economy. When they look at a building, whether it was built in the 19th century or the 20th century, they can still undress it. And that's a very valuable thing. It's something we try to convey to our students in the first term. They do an analysis of an existing building on the Harvard campus. We walk them around a

Cambridge neighborhood and ask them what they see — we try to inculcate some sense that these things were put together and you can take them apart. And then we take them into a workshop and have them break things. I think the students are coming out of the program with a better sense of structures and a better sense of design.

■ **Steinberg:** It's hard to teach, because it takes such an immense amount of time to actually get to know — to really understand — materials. I've been researching and working with plywood for about six years. There are things I'm only now beginning to understand about it. What we can do as teachers is give students a sense of some basic properties and processes, so that once they're out in the field, they have an ordered way of looking at things and of acquiring a deeper understanding.

■ **Martini:** It's interesting to hear you're so fascinated with this subject — because not many o your peers are. But a semester-long class is maybe 2 hours total exposure. A student from the GSD [Harvard Graduate School of Design] came to wor for me one summer. He worked 40 to 50 hours a week for 10 weeks, and he happened to be put on job that was a fascinating design problem, a new underground library attached to an 1880 academy building. So he saw all the raw materials, he saw waterproofing, he saw how things fit together. I ha no idea where that guy is today, but I guarantee he a hell of a good architect. Because he took the time to go out and learn on his own, to get his feet dirty and put his hands on materials. And I would highl encourage you to encourage some of your students to take advantage of those types of opportunities. I makes the connection between the classroom and practical application.

■ **Steinberg:** That's an interesting point. There are countries that require a field internship of six months or a year for young architects.

■ **Leski:** Hands-on exposure to materials has re-infiltrated the curriculum at RISD [Rhode Island School of Design]. RISD historically was a crafts college. I can think of three components of "craft," although I'm sure there are many more. One is learned or inherited: a way of working with a material, a process. Another is discovering the nature of the material that you're working with — its limits, its behavior. And then the third is something that the individual brings to a material, which, for lack of better words, I'll call caring or attentiveness. That comes from time spent working with materials in a devoted way. The first two offer resistance to the third, to what the individual migh want to do. But there are times when the individ-ual's caring and investment in understanding the material actually make the material do things it doesn't want to do. The Gothic architects found that stone could do what would seem to be the antithesis of stone's nature — they made it soar. Tl individual's investment actually challenges the limi and the traditions of a material. And I would say that's a way of defining what we're doing at RISD — trying to generate ideas through working with materials.



Photo © Jeff Goldberg/Esto



Photo courtesy Studio 360

Above:
Kauffman Foundation
Kansas City
Kallmannn McKinnell
& Wood

Right:
Detail, furniture for a house
Bangkok, Thailand
Studio 360

Tehrani: The arguments for knowing the behavior of materials are irrefutable. But I'd like to play the devil's advocate for a moment. Let's say you have delicate hands and don't particularly want to touch materials. What can you do with drawings that somebody in the field of construction may not be able to do? If you have a command of descriptive geometry, projection, digital modeling, or drawing, you can devise ways of doing shop drawings — the drawings that contractors traditionally produce to demonstrate the details of the fabrication process. If you can unravel a design and lay out all of the pieces in a shop drawing, you have shown not only that it is buildable, but also how it is built. And you haven't cut the steel or poured the concrete or in fact come into contact with any materials as such. Frank Gehry has demonstrated the significance of this.

Padjen: We are in fact seeing new materials used in unfamiliar ways in three-dimensional forms without any apparent precedent. How does the construction industry respond to this?

Martini: I think Nader has the answer. If you're going to create something that is unusual or propose a use of materials that is not normal, it certainly is terrific to be able say, By the way, I've thought this out, and I can show you how these dissimilar materials are going to work, and how this structure is going to fit together, and here's a head start on the shop drawings.

Padjen: But that seems to invert the general momentum in the profession, which is moving toward downloading that kind of responsibility onto the contractors and subcontractors.

Tehrani: It's a question of empowerment. Usually you give the drawings to contractors and they price it. But they price it in accordance with what they speculate will be the way to build it. If you figure it all out first, you're removing or minimizing that speculation. And you get to specify the means and method, which is indeed inverting the contractor's additional responsibility for means and methods. But it really places the ball back in our courts as architects.

Szostkowski: Some of the real triumph of Gehry's Bilbao project was due to the engineering and the control of the construction process. The architects took responsibility for the shop drawings. They produced three-dimensional drawings of all the connections; they built mock-ups. It was a way of controlling the costs and ensuring quality.

Griggs: In another Gehry project — the Experience Music Project in Seattle — the architects had their own team in the steel fabricator's office, telling the steel people how to cut their pieces on a day-by-day basis. Which is quite a remarkable change in practice. One has to wonder whether this type of activity will lead to the breakdown of what's become normative architectural practice. The legal profession is going to have a hell of a time keeping up.

Tehrani: Ten years ago, there was a real divorce in this field between computer-driven technologies and the idea of craft. One thing that Kimo is doing at the GSD is encouraging interest in CAD-CAM [computer-aided design/computer-aided manufacturing] operations. Some students are interested in materiality, some are not. But even those who are not become interested in translating what they are working with on screen into three dimensions. They can do that now with software that connects their computers to a router in the shop, which will fabricate their computer-generated forms into physical models. It's a new kind of industrial or digital craft drawn from new computer technologies.

Steinberg: Understanding the process of making things is different from having knowledge about materials. I could produce a shop drawing that would provide a series of instructions and yet be devoid of material properties.

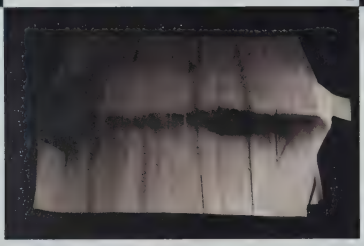
Leski: I don't think the work that Nader is describing would necessarily be devoid of material. The relation between craft and computer-driven technologies is there in Gehry's work. You can start tracing analogous properties from one step of its development to another, even though the material might shift. It might be paper in the model, it might be steel when it's constructed. There are geometric properties that speak to each other.

Padjen: I wonder if a focus on geometric modeling will simply underscore the fear that we are losing our hands-on understanding of materials.

Griggs: There were a lot of very complex geometric constructions illustrated in 18th- and 19th-century pattern books. What we're talking about is not so different from, say, building a spiral stair, which is something that a 19th-century carpenter might have developed as his signature piece. Someone figured out the geometry, drew it up, and published it to give other carpenters the directions for fabricating it. That required serious abstract thinking apart from the hands-on production. We've always had tools. We've always had hard ways to make things and easy ways to make things. We're part of a continuum —



Photos courtesy Marco Steinberg



Process studies:

Above: Veneers and crossbanding for prototypical plywood box

Below: Molded wood veneer strips forming rigid complex wood shell

Marco Steinberg



Visiting artist's apartment
Abbot Hall, Phillips Andover
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we have different tools, but we also have the same tools; we haven't lost hand saws and chisels, but we now also have compound-mitre saws, CAD-CAM routers, and three-dimensional printers. We don't have to use these new tools to simply recreate the things we made with saws and chisels, even if we can build those very things faster or better. We can make new things. Frank Gehry used some of the new tools to create new forms, but he has also pushed the development of innovative tools — drawing tools, engineering tools, and fabrication tools — that he needs but that haven't previously existed.

■ **Martini:** Tools are one thing, but the craftsperson behind the tool is another. Do the people exist to build what you guys are dreaming up? Even if you explain how it should be put together and what tools should be used to put it together, is the manpower available to do it, to provide true craftsmanship? That's a dying art. People with that skill and that desire to pursue that level of craftsmanship are starting to dwindle in our society. It's my biggest challenge. You can create something new, figure out how to put it together, but ultimately you still need a pair of hands to do it for you.

■ **Leski:** Society has to support that as a form of intelligence that's in the hands.

■ **Martini:** Absolutely. No question.

■ **Leski:** You made me think of a chair that we designed and produced — it has as many complex curves as you can possibly imagine and it was upholstered in leather. The upholsterer is a guy named Arnie Reed, who upholstered Jeeps during the Vietnam War. He has an incredible ability to take anything and put leather over it. We asked him if he wanted us to do what we were all just talking about — to draw out the pattern, the shapes of the flat pieces of leather. He said no, because the kind of differential stretching in the hide of an animal makes drawing the form irrelevant. But he knew in his hands which way it would pull and stretch, and he got the leather on without any sags. It's a form of intelligence.

■ **Steinberg:** One way of defining intelligence is the ability to learn from your mistakes. Over time, you make so many mistakes that you develop an innate ability to understand what is going to work and what's not. But that's difficult to develop when you're dealing with new materials and new processes. We tend to accept that materials hav

finite properties that we can learn. But you can misuse materials — make a "mistake" — and discover that they can do things that they aren't "supposed" to do.

■ **Moss:** I really like reading fashion magazines. One reason is that you can find statements like, "I'm working with a new weave of wool and rubber, which then boil. We're trying it out in a biased construction. It seems to be going well, just a few bugs." That R&D component is something that most architects have never quite figured out how to integrate into their practices. Most of us have trouble at the simplest level. We were looking at a piece of composite board in the office the other day, and somebody put some Johnson's Wax on it. It looked fantastic. But how are we going to know if we can specify that for exterior use? What's it going to do in ultraviolet light? How do we specify the number of coats?

The continuing attempt to develop an architecture that is more than the sum of the parts can be very frustrating. I think that our sample room is a really bathsome place — it typifies all the worst aspects of contemporary architecture. Materials are seen as abstractions. The difficulty that I think we all share is to get anybody to experience them in a sensuous way. It's very hard to reawaken that aspect of the material world. When we were working on a museum recently, we made a list of the materials that keep people from "seeing" — materials that are signals to people that they don't have to pay attention. We came up with paint, any kind of vinyl tile, sheet rock, and any kind of suspended ceiling. And we tried as much as we could to avoid introducing any of those unspoken signifiers into the project.

I think that the interest in new materials from young architects in our office is frequently just as abstract, just as un-material, as the worst consumer's fixation on a particular almond or avocado kitchen appliance. In most cases, it's equally superficial. Ralph Appelbaum, the exhibition designer for the Holocaust Museum, once said, "I have a mission, and my mission is to show the American people that it's OK for them to spend leisure time on reality." On *reality*.

When you work on old buildings, you find that they already have a certain presence. In fact, the designer's work usually starts with removing aspects of that presence, the evocative components. I suppose you could say that the experience dwindles from the first time you see a building with grass growing in it and dead pigeons lying around, when you start to clean things up. But there is a leg up with existing buildings, precisely because they show signs of wear — temporal overlays. They reconnect people to the physical fabric because they've been messed about. And therefore we're often allowed to do things we could never do in a new building. We're allowed to leave a lot of randomness in the final outcome. It might not matter if things don't line up, or if you can see that there are 50 layers of paint. You can't design that character into a new building.

This is all about one issue: the emotional connection to real materials from the point of view of the user.

■ **Padjen:** I wonder if that yearning for an emotional connection doesn't come from some primal need to understand the physical world around us. Perhaps it's manifested in the urge to indulge in the very tactile qualities that you're talking about — if not through texture and visual delight, then through ornament or decoration, words that have been purged from our design vocabulary. But material and craft are playing a much more significant role in — for want of a better term — the Modernist Revival today than they ever had in the original go-round. Perhaps we crave a degree of texture in our lives, whatever the source.

■ **Griggs:** When you're working with an historic building, you're often working with a building that in its time was built as practically as possible. If the stones were set randomly and left rough on the inside, it was because it took energy, hand-applied energy, to cut them to make them square. There was no point, because they were going to be covered by plaster walls. We may appreciate that character today, but to replicate it would be wildly expensive and rather nonsensical. We still build in very practical ways, based on the tools and the materials we have today. But there are ways to build things that expose the inherent beauty and architectonic qualities of the construction methods. The result may have a different character from older buildings, but it can be equally strong and interesting.

■ **Leski:** Do you think that people bring the same consciousness to buildings today that people brought to buildings a century ago? Henry suggested that provoking any kind of consciousness or awareness of a tactile experience is an achievement today.

■ **Griggs:** My view is that we are much too romantic about what people in the past felt about building. We might appreciate an exposed-brick and heavy-timber interior, but it was probably built by people who knew those surfaces wouldn't be seen. Otherwise, they would have covered it with plaster. I don't find any evidence in the books that I read that there was some kind of glorious, uplifting feeling about building those structures. The workmen were sweating. They hadn't had a decent bath in a month. And this is what they did to make a living.

Leski: We've seen in recent decades a rise of gastronomic standards. People suddenly want Häagen-Dazs instead of so-called supermarket ice cream. There hasn't been a corresponding increased awareness of the materials that they surround themselves with. But I think it did once exist. A Norwegian sculptor recently moved a very large stone from its original site to another place in Norway. And when he arrived at the new location with the stone and his crane, there was a picket. A strike. People thought it was absolutely outrageous that you could move a stone from one place to another place that wasn't its home — a place that had a different kind of stone. That's a consciousness of material as a way of writing history, a living history of place.

Tehrani: I think your Häagen-Dazs analogy is a very important one. When I came to the US 20 years ago, the croissant had just arrived. In terms of the culinary world, it was about as cutting edge as you got. Now you can find *nouvelle cuisine* on every corner in Wichita, and everybody's experimenting. The food industry, the fashion industry, and Hollywood have all engaged in experimentation with their respective media — and because they are linked more directly to popular culture, they have all generated some hype and public consciousness.

Architecture can do the same thing through its medium: materials. And for that very reason, we are seeing both new material experimentation as well as the importation of building processes that are rooted in other cultures. I sense that the ability to seduce clients through materials and material experimentation is becoming more important — we are seeing the "commodification" of materials. It's a question of marketing and selling architecture as a form of culture.

Steinberg: This cultural aspect of materials interests me — I think it's related to the emotional connection that Henry described. The vinyl floors that he mentioned are invisible to us because we are so accustomed to them. That doesn't necessarily mean the material has no value in itself. I have friends who come from abroad and have never seen vinyl floors. For them it's amazing, because suddenly they're seeing it for the first time, and they see something that is fabulous. But if we take that same vinyl and put it on the wall, we might suddenly also see something that is fabulous.

Padjen: I think we're just beginning to investigate the cultural meaning of materials. I would like to recommend two books to you. One is David Brooks' *Bobos in Paradise* — "Bobos" being his coinage for the "bourgeois bohemians" who he believes define the new upper class in this country. It's a sociological look at contemporary culture — in which he makes the point that the standards of Bobo tastes are very different from those of the recent past. Bobos are attracted to coarseness and texture; they eat peasant breads rather than the refined white breads they grew up with. They are attracted to "found" spaces — lofts and converted industrial buildings. They obsess over the right ston for their kitchen counters. It turns out that material are a significant aspect of Bobo culture.

The other book I would recommend is a wonderful book that unfortunately didn't get the recognition it should have — *The Refinement of America* by Richard Bushman, who is a cultural historian at Columbia. Bushman was struck by a simple observation as he was studying the early 1700s: Over a period of only 30 years, people in this country went from a dark, coarse, medieval life to a life of lightness and grace, the Georgian period. Why was that? His book describes the culture of gentility, as i is called, which arrived here through the English aristocracy at that time. It's best described as the culture of refinement of the individual, and its focu on self-improvement later gave rise to the American middle class, aided by the Industrial Revolution. It's a fascinating argument. But one aspect of that period, to get back to materials, was that people *wanted* a lack of texture — they wanted to escape the coarseness that had defined their lives. They did not leave exposed timbers, but boxed them up, plastered them over, and decorated them with applied moldings. I've begun to view materials in terms of cultural cycles. And maybe that's what we're seeing now — the confluence of new technologies that are in effect indulging this new Bobo interest in the material world.

Steinberg: We could add a third book, *American Psycho*, which deals with ideals of cultural refinement in the 1980s — the obsession that people had maybe still have, with making things perfect in way that would reflect back on them. People obsessed over business cards — the fonts, the ink color.

Szostkowski: Nader earlier referred to that phenomenon as the "commodification" of materials — I wonder if he was making a judgment or just noting a current state of affairs.

Tehrani: I accept it —to some degree — because if you want to practice, you have to participate to some degree in the cultural realities around you.

How you might chose to manipulate those realities is something altogether different. Once you understand that you can elevate a cheap material like, say, felt to a higher status, then you can exercise a myriad of architectural strategies with it. It's Marco's vinyl argument — if you can show how it can impart a certain value for the client, you take that opportunity. But you are recognizing that culture is a malleable thing. Clients, despite the fact that they often think they know what they want, are usually very open to new ideas. It's your problem to figure out how to represent things in ways that maybe they have not seen before. And of course sometimes you fall down on your face. But it's a fair game to play.

Martini: It's also an economic game. And that takes some genius and creativity on the part of the designer. The challenge is how to do for a buck what anybody can do for two — and still make it look good. It's one thing to play with new materials and come up with new ideas, another if the economics don't work. You really want to get your architecture built? Figure out how to do it economically and creatively and your clients are going to love you. And maybe cheap felt is the answer.

Griggs: I am sure that we are fetishizing materials in a rather extreme way. And I'm not convinced that you can ascribe cultural values to materials in the ways we are discussing. Elizabeth brought up the question of ornament earlier. I'm going to guess that no one in this room other than me has taken a course in ornament.

Padjen: There's such a thing?

Griggs: There is such a thing. I used to work with Kent Bloomer, a professor at Yale who took the brave, bold step of developing a course on ornament. This was perhaps 15 years ago. It was fascinating. Once you study ornament, you understand the power of it. And you wonder how we could have, as a profession, decided not to take advantage of it. It's like dropping all the best words out of your vocabulary. One thing that ornament is really good at is educating people about what a building is, when it was built, and what the culture's values — or the owner's values — were at the time. It doesn't have to be kitschy or overt; it can be wonderfully abstract. When we try to convince a client of how wonderful a particular material will be in a particular spot, we're giving them a story. Once they have a story it becomes theirs. And once it's theirs, they're sold for it and they'll dive into their pockets and pay for it. I found the same thing happens with ornament. If you accept ornament as part of the discussion, it can allow you, as it allowed architects historically, to let materials be materials. Ornament is spectacularly efficient at making a reference for very little money.

Tehrani: One interpretation of ornament could be that it is a means to establish a relationship between the whole and its parts. One example from classical architecture is the relationship between the column, its capital, and an entablature — where ornament establishes the syntax of the building.

Leski: And is that also your definition, Kimo?

Griggs: When I say "ornament," I don't necessarily mean anything historical. Ornament is an element that is super-added to utility. A post and beam have utility. If you put a column capital on the post, you've really added to its utility. You don't necessarily need the capital, but it's a nice reference to building technology. If you then modify or shape the capital in such a way that it refers to something else outside building methods — a myth, a reference to your home town, or the tragic death of the owner — you've provided ornament.



Photo: Peter Vandenwater

Mass MOCA
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■ **Tehrani:** But the problem with that definition is that it presupposes that there is something absolutely and irreducibly utilitarian. There are many ways that the post and the beam could be joined. And that is a design moment — there is an act of choice. Is there a way to define the relationship between structure and ornament that is not so dichotomous?

■ **Steinberg:** I think that ornament is just another way of using materials. Materials have the ability to be ornamental on their own terms. Maybe we are fetishizing materials, but I think that materials can transcend their own utility to make some of the references that Kimo suggested.

■ **Moss:** I definitely fetishize materials. A large sheet of glass to me is still an absolute miracle. One of the tools we have at our disposal is to use familiar materials in new ways, and allow people to say, Oh my God, I never thought of that before. That is tremendously exciting. And that, by the way, is what I find so distressing about most new historicist buildings — they discourage that kind of exploration.

■ **Steinberg:** Maybe fetishes have gotten a bad rap. Thinking back to Henry's comment about his horror of materials libraries makes me think that they only allow one way of experiencing a material, which is visual. And that's my problem with them — they offer no other way to understand the material. When you are reducing choices only to aesthetic decisions, you're not exploiting all the possibilities.

■ **Martini:** And we, the builders, can tell the difference. Sometimes architects send us drawings early on in the design process, usually concept drawings and a rendering. I got a set recently and showed it around at a staff meeting. I said, "What does this look like?" And the four guys in my office said, "Leaks." Seven different types of material on the face of the building — but I'm sure they looked like really nice materials in somebody's library.

■ **Padjen:** I wonder how much material selection and detailing is really inventing ornament that will be acceptable to a certain ideology. *Brises-soleil* — sunscreens — are my favorite example. Anyone who has to work inside with lines of shadow that change continually as the sun moves goes nuts. But it is a way of introducing a level of ornament or texture to the building. It's the second step that Kimo described — still within the vocabulary of building technology, and therefore acceptable. We're seeing more of this now at a certain level of what you could call "decorative detailing" — adding fins, adding joints, for no reason but to add texture.

■ **Moss:** One local firm working really beautifully with ornament in an integrated way is Chan Krieger. Their gymnasium at Buckingham Brown and Nichols School is a wonderful example. The walls are a combination of glass block and concrete block that looks affordable. It's definitely a kind of ornament, even though it may not have a lot of external references. I'm not sure about that part of Kimo's definition. But it certainly is an elaboration of the building that is beyond what would be strictly necessary just to create a rain screen and an air barrier.

■ **Griggs:** I see ornament as being all-inclusive. It's a word that makes us really nervous for some reason. No one's discussed this in any serious way for 50 years. We tend to reject it when we don't even know how to define it. That's an astonishing thing to me.

■ **Steinberg:** Maybe that's another kind of cultural issue — what the term has come to suggest within the culture of the architecture profession. Ornament implies superfluous and superficial. If the term itself is a problem, we should come up with another one. Before plywood was introduced to the market, it was called "veneer board" — which suggested something thin and fake. In order to sell it, the industry had to come up with a different name.

■ **Leski:** It doesn't have to be superfluous. Ornament isn't necessarily something that comes later, that is applied to something that's already existing. An acoustical problem, for example, might be solved very easily by applying some product. But the solution of the problem could be brought inherently into the design, so that it could actually be part of the bones. And that suggests a kind of design craftsmanship — a sensibility or profound awareness of design. That's a much more difficult thing to define.

■ **Szostkowski:** Our sense of craftsmanship in a building — on the part of both the designer and the builders — is often based on the way we perceive its materials. People respond to buildings that have an apparent quality about them — a sense of humanity, evidence of the hand, something pleasing to the eye. When I listen to people talk about the buildings they like, what they respond to is not so much the design, but the generosity implied by the building. And that is most often represented in its tactile, *material*, quality. ■■■



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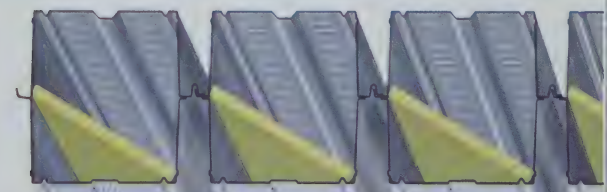
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Why Bad Things Happen to Good Buildings

by Thomas A. Schwartz

Most people in the construction industry have had this experience: Someone (a client, a guy at a cocktail party, your Aunt Ethel) asks, "Why can't you people build things the way you used to? Why do new buildings fall apart?" Depending upon the circumstances, the question is posed in tones ranging from outrage to jocularity to sincere curiosity. It could be easily dismissed as an unsophisticated query from someone who doesn't appreciate the complex art and science of construction today. But it is based on a valid observation. We *don't* make buildings the way we used to. And sometimes we suffer the consequences.

In the first half of the 20th century, building façades underwent a transition from massive load-bearing walls to relatively thin, lightweight, non-load-bearing "curtain walls." Before the transition, walls consisted of layers of masonry ("wythes"), which formed part of the load-bearing structure of the building. Floors were supported by the exterior walls and moved with the walls. The masonry also provided resistance to water penetration, aided by design features such as belt courses and drip edges that reduced water flow over the façade and protected the more vulnerable joints. Any moisture that did migrate to the inside evaporated readily because of good ventilation. These walls resisted deterioration because their materials had inherent durability and because the thermal mass of these walls mitigated temperature swings. But by today's standards, these walls were expensive, energy inefficient, and limited in design flexibility. Something else was needed — something that offered improved thermal performance, greater design freedom, and lower cost.

Curtain walls proved to be the answer. The transition to curtain walls began in the late 1800s and continued until the middle of the 1900s. In the early part of the transition, walls were still massive, but they no longer supported the structure's floor loads. In the latter part of the transition, lightweight walls were "hung" on the structural frame. It soon became apparent that the lack of mass and lack of inherent resistance to the effects of water exposure required new ways of managing water penetration and protecting vulnerable materials — such as cavity drainage systems, internal waterproofing elements, and durable flashing materials. But they haven't evolved without a few bumps in the road.

Why is it that water problems are a bigger issue now for buildings than they have ever been? The weather hasn't changed significantly. What has changed, however, is demonstrated by three recent trends: over-reliance on sealants to do the job of waterproofing; the push to make buildings air-tight to reduce energy costs; and the widespread use of moisture-sensitive materials in wall construction.

Instead of providing redundancies to serve as fail-safe protection against water penetration, designers and contractors began to rely solely on surface-sealed barrier walls. Metal flashings that once were soldered are now lapped and "sealed." We ask more of sealant performance than we have had reason to expect. The result has been too many walls that leak immediately after construction.

Even small amounts of water penetration can have serious consequences. Improvement in air tightness can paradoxically create problems in moisture retention, because the lack of air flow slows drying. Water that might have penetrated and then evaporated within a few days may now require weeks to dry, during which time a building might be exposed to additional rainstorms. The net result is accumulation of moisture, prolonged high humidity, and even saturation within wall cavities, creating an environment ripe for rapid deterioration and mold growth.

Despite the relatively high moisture absorption of the transitional wall systems of the early 20th century, many of these walls survived well with minimal attention for many decades. The transitional walls were primarily constructed of stone, brick, and mortar that could remain wet without rapid deterioration. Compare this with walls assembled today from soluble gypsum sheathing boards, corrosion-prone light-gauge metal studs, and insulating glass with water-degradable edge seals.

The transition from masonry load-bearing walls in many cases meant a transition to glass, now one of the most common cladding materials. The quintessentially brittle material, glass has introduced its own set of challenges. Glass is usually installed in metal framing systems, which means that differential thermal movement is inevitable: Aluminum frames subjected to a change in temperature can move about 2.5 times more than glass subjected to the same change. Breakage can result if the design does not accommodate this differential movement.

Bad things happen to some good, even great, buildings. Sometimes good buildings fail because their designers have pushed the limits of technology in order to create something new — Frank Lloyd Wright's Falling Water is now undergoing structural repair to its famous cantilevers. Sometimes they fail because of a defect in a common material or component — 12 years after its construction, the building at 303 Congress Street in Boston suddenly settled 6 inches due to errors in the production of the concrete mix that was used in its precast piles; the building was eventually demolished. And sometimes buildings fail through a

combination of these scenarios — when familiar materials and technologies are used in new ways. Bostonians are familiar with one of the most famous examples: the John Hancock Tower, which was clad in more than an acre of plywood after its mirror-glass windows began to fracture in 1972 and 1973.

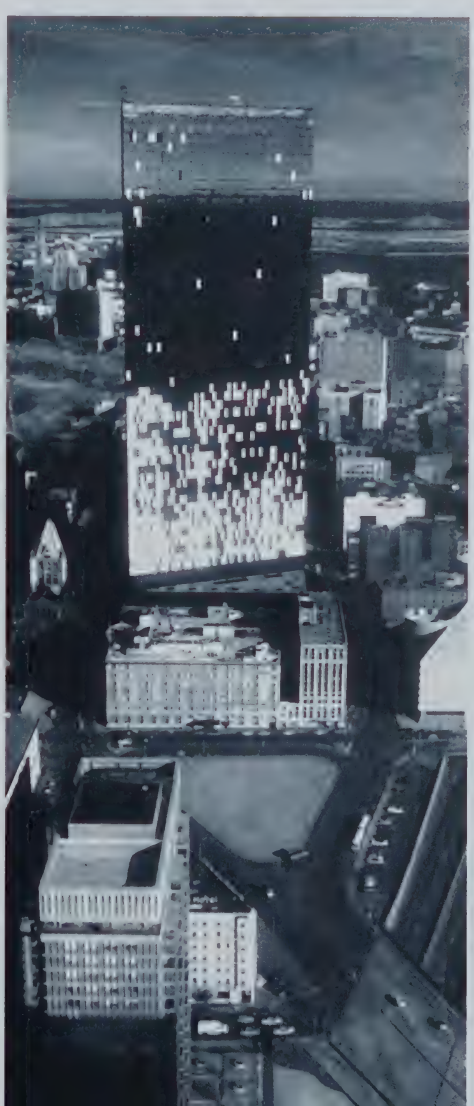
A "gag order" imposed on the parties to the resulting legal dispute prevented the release of the facts regarding the cause of the breakage — giving rise to many theories and myths, some of which exist to this day. Initially, many design professionals thought the reason for the breakage lay in the fact that the tower swayed excessively in the wind. Although it was indeed swaying substantially, this was not the reason for the glass breakage. Another hypothesis was that wind forces at "hot spots," which resulted from the rhomboid shape of the tower, caused overstressing of the glass. Substantial "hot spots" did exist, but only a small percentage of the glass was subject to anything near the load for which it had been designed. Still another myth was that the windows broke because of the stress they endured from the settlement of the tower's foundation.

But in fact, extraordinary external forces and the building's structural design were not the primary cause of the failure. The problem actually lay in the insulating glass itself.

The insulating-glass units that made up the façade were fabricated with a thin lead-tape spacer to separate the two panes of glass. The tape was soldered to the glass after the edge of the glass was coated with a film of copper to make it more receptive to the solder. This created a tenacious bond between the spacer and the glass — which constituted the product's greatest strength as well as the source of its demise.

The lead-tape seal insulating unit was the premier product of the time. It was expensive, but it performed very well with relatively small-size clear glass — the typical application in the 1940s through the early 1960s that is still performing well. However, by the late '60s, large-size glass with tints and reflective coatings became popular. The large sizes and increased thermal loads associated with the tints and coatings caused substantial differential movement and increased stress along the glass-to-tape bond, and eventually, the bond began to separate. The bond, however, was so strong in some areas that the tape ripped microscopically small pieces of glass from the glass surface. These sites concentrated stress from wind loads and ultimately proved catastrophic.

Not everything we did in years past was good (e.g., the one-acre copper roof on Grand Central Terminal, built in 1913, was doomed from the start due to lack of proper detailing to accommodate thermal movement and avoid metal fatigue). Not everything we do now is bad. But innovation is — and should be — relentless. And with innovation comes reduced predictability and increased risk. To meet the challenge that innovation presents, we must use the lessons of our history, coupled with sound technical fundamentals and a healthy dose of common sense. ■■■



Thomas A. Schwartz, PE, is president of Simpson Gumpertz & Heger Inc. in Arlington, MA. He was a principal investigator of the glass breakage at the John Hancock Tower and in 1990 testified in Federal Court on the cause of the failure. He is a frequent lecturer and author on issues of building envelope performance.



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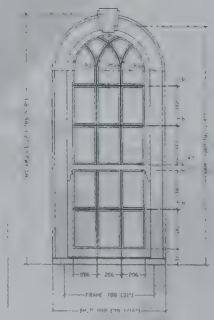
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Pipe Dreams

by Steve Rosenthal

The inspiration for these photographs is a hidden treasure — the interior of the magnificent Richardsonian pumping station in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts. Commonly known as the Waterworks, it was designed in 1887 by Arthur Vinal, Boston's official city architect, to house the pumps that supplied water from the adjacent reservoir to the city. Immediately evident in the photographs is the quality of the materials and the superb craftsmanship, representing an era when Americans took great pride in their civic architecture. Less tangible is the Piranesian atmosphere — the power and mystery suggested by these massive machines which were models in their day of engineering creativity, efficiency, and reliability. The unity of the architecture and machinery is the source of much of the power in these images.





The building is a designated Boston Landmark, and its site, which includes the Chestnut Hill Reservoir, is on the National Register of Historic Places. A citizens group, the Friends of the Waterworks, has been working with the Boston Preservation Alliance and Historic Massachusetts, Inc. to ensure its preservation and reuse. After nearly a decade of effort, success seems likely: a Request for Proposals will be issued to prospective developers in early 2001.

Steve Rosenthal is an architectural photographer in Newton, MA.



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Boston: Home of the Bean and the Brick

"Maybe I've been in Boston too long, but is something the matter with brick?"

Brian Healy AIA
in *ArchitectureBoston*, Winter 1999

Pity the poor brick. This unassuming material carries a lot of baggage in this town, charged with maintaining an urban context but often blamed for straitjacketing our most inventive architects. Perhaps its hand-made quality and its long history have contributed to the obsession with brick. Architects frequently anthropomorphize the material — most famously, Lou Kahn, who imagined an entire conversation:



"Design demands an understanding of the order. When you are designing in brick, you must ask brick what it wants or what it can do. Brick will say, I like an arch. You say, But arches are difficult to make, they cost more money. I think you could use concrete across your opening equally well. But the brick says, I know you're right, but if you ask me what I like, I like an arch. And you say, Why be so stubborn? and the brick says, May I just make a little remark? Do you realize you are talking about a beam, and the beam of brick is an arch... you're dealing with brick...you've got to put it into glory because that's the only position it deserves."[1]

The time seems right to pose the question once again: Is something the matter with brick?

In the context of a city steeped in brick, Bostonians tend to polarize along the lines of "more of the same would be best" versus "we're tired of brick, it's time for some other material." In Boston we often seem compelled to use brick, not only because it is so enduring, but also because it makes such easy associations with our 18th- and 19th-century neighborhoods.

Yet something is not quite right. Can whole new quarters of the city be founded on vague, rough approximations of the past with any degree of authenticity? This is a much larger question than one of material selection. But a few observations are perhaps worth noting: As ever, brick is heavy, inert, and bound to earth by gravity. The expression of its nature is an opportunity. In contrast, brick has recently been relegated to the role of thin cladding. In this transformation, it has unwittingly assumed the properties of a skin or textile. Nonetheless, this new condition is also an opportunity — one that encourages invention in the surface of the wall. Lou Kahn's sensibility was to look for deep order within design, in which material properties and poetic analogy played a critical role. Brick may be so commonplace now that we ignore this quality, but it seems to me that the "order of brick" remains a powerful perspective. ■■■

Chris Iwerks AIA is the director of TAMS Architecture in Boston.

1. Louis I. Kahn, *The Invisible City* — International Design Conference at Aspen, Colorado, June 19, 1972



Photo © Steve Rosenthal

West Campus Residence Halls
Northeastern University
Boston
William Rawn Associates, Architects, Inc.

Brick is just one kind of building material, with some benefits and some limitations (it is not very energy-efficient, for example, and it is not well-suited to tall structures). But in Boston, brick has become so over-invested with meaning that choosing it is no longer an innocent act. Here, brick has become the victim of place-marketers. Brick has been cooked up as one of those ready-made essences of Boston that can be force-fed to tourists like Baked Beans and Boston Scrod. It is a reductive formula that distracts everyone from real history and experience, that insulates both visitors and natives from creating their own sense of place. What was once traditional now merely represents tradition. This is not to say that brick cannot be used in refreshing and thought-provoking ways, but here, in this city, it is an almost impossibly overwhelming challenge. In this context, the Boston Redevelopment Authority's initiative to encourage the use of other kinds of materials in the Seaport district should be seen in a positive way as a strike against mindlessness and lack of creativity. They are right to assert that designing a building — or even an entire district — to truly belong in this city should be a challenge instead of an excuse to fall back on cliché. ■■■

Warren Schwartz FAIA is a principal of Schwartz/Silver Architects in Boston.

In an ideal world, brick — a long-lived material of truly multicultural origins — would not carry any stylistic or historical connotations.

In reality, throughout the country and most clearly in Boston (given the fact that it is the city's dominant material, and given the city's conservative architectural climate), brick has accrued a parasitic semantic growth, a deadly tumor of associations and references very much like a parasitic natural growth or fungus adhering to its surface. It has become synonymous with Georgian and Colonial revivals, and more so, with the aesthetics and the values of the traditional as perceived by the general public. And regrettably, too many architects have fallen neatly into the equation: If it is to be built in Boston, it must be in brick; if it is built in brick, it must be historical.

But in fact, one can — with design effort and intellectual astuteness — disassociate the material from these historic and aesthetic meanings. Doing so opens up the possibility to demonstrate brick's contemporary potential: its tectonic plasticity; its possible use as a pixel (that is to say, as a dot to represent with); its capacity to produce tonal and textural patterns; its capacity for other forms of iconographic representation. In short, brick, by virtue of its original ideological innocence, can still be an inventive contemporary material. And it can be so in spite of both the unconditional love it receives from the culturally illiterate and the total disdain it gets from the fashion victims of the moment. ■■■

Rodolfo Machado is a principal of Machado and Silvetti Associates, Inc. in Boston.



Photo: Jeff Goldberg/ESTO



Left:
Wheeler School
Providence, RI
Schwartz/Silver Architects

Right:
Utah Museum of Fine Arts
Salt Lake City
Machado and Silvetti Associat

If, for better or for worse, brick has come to represent "ye olde building," that is a problem with design and not with the material. The rowhouses of Beacon Hill, the former Kennedy's Department Store at the base of 101 Arch Street, Rowes Wharf, and Heritage on the Garden are all brick buildings, yet they are all dissimilar in style. These last two examples show that exciting new design can be accomplished in brick. Historic-district guidelines that control new construction are intended to prevent new buildings from overpowering the existing character of the district, not to require carbon-copies of historic styles. This goal can be accomplished through massing, height, setback, and material. Since brick is the most dominant historic material in Boston, brick is the most common choice to provide compatibility. A well-designed building will wear its brick skin well. ■■■

Susan Park is the president of the Boston Preservation Alliance.



Photo Scot Zimmerman

The view from our studio looks over the rooftops of brick-built Boston. Bricks of different colors, surface glazes, proportions, and forms articulate what at first seems to be a uniform building fabric. Bricks are turned and displaced to create three-dimensional patterns, undulations, layers, and corbels. These translations between vertical and horizontal give brick buildings the fantastic ambiguity of being a truly plastic surface made of units. Brick embodies the Modern fantasy of an authentic architectural logic of infinite variety, derived entirely from the arrangement of mass-produced components.

Rather than mandate an historic image of brick, which can never be fully realized with contemporary construction, or accept its use as a banal veneer product, other more efficient applications of contemporary brick can be explored. Hollow brick can improve building acoustics. New compounds in mortar materials allow the joints between bricks to become energy-efficient sources of ambient light. Three-dimensional "printing" now allows brick molds to be shaped on computers, enabling less expensive short runs. Multiplying the possible functions of brick can offset the cost of brick construction with gains in performance and value. The challenge to the architect's imagination is to see beyond the established historic applications of brick and to understand brick as a medium of ongoing aesthetic and technical innovations. Boston has the opportunity to build on its brickwork traditions to address the still unanswered questions of the depth, scale, and performance of the contemporary wall. ■■■

Sheila Kennedy AIA is a principal of Kennedy & Violich Architecture in Boston.

Brick and Boston is that intersection of material and place where many of us search for a contemporary, indeed a Modernist, accommodation of the strong red-brick traditions of the city. Brick is too often seen as the enemy of the inventive.

I would posit that brick can be celebrated explicitly in several Modernist ways. I am fascinated by brick as a taut skin, accentuated by details such as flush corner windows and relieving-angles that obviously protect large expanses of glass. Crisply wrapping a building, such thin brick even has a fascinating non-Boston precedent: Jefferson's taut serpentine walls at the University of Virginia.

The modular size of brick says something special about Boston as a human-scaled, pedestrian city, and about brick as a hand-held and hand-laid material. In the search for a Boston architecture of invention in this populist age, brick can offer an intriguing freedom to be contemporary while establishing a literal and figurative continuity with the city. As such, brick can be one of the generators of a special Boston Modernism. ■■■

William Rawn FAIA is the principal of William Rawn Associates in Boston.

The use of brick in Boston architecture has received a lot of bad press lately — mostly due to its sheer ubiquity. But brick is an ancient, practical, flexible, colorful, inexpensive, long-lasting, readily available building material. In all its various forms — mud, straw, clay, cast-in-sand, cast-in-molds — it has served us well through the ages. And let's remember the very human act of creating structures brick by brick. What other material can deliver so many positive attributes?

Perhaps the recent tendency to treat brick as if it were some kind of wallpaper has resulted in too much of a good thing. But the infinite possibilities for brick detail in patterns, in color, in texture, and in combination with other materials can lead to a lively and invigorated streetscape. A human-scaled environment punctuated by glass, steel, terracotta, and even titanium accents will be a welcome addition to the Boston that we all appreciate. A creative designer recognizes that brick is just one of many desirable building materials.

It's not the brick, it's the design, stupid. ■■■

James Alexander FAIA is a principal of Finegold Alexander + Associates in Boston.

Bricks have been cheerfully deferential to the whims of quixotic architects since the Middle Ages. But two developments occurring in the 1970s and 1980s changed the way Boston architects viewed this simple material. The 1976 Bicentennial prompted an exuberant ballyhooing of all things American, including our architectural history, followed by a nationwide backlash over our calamitous experiment with Modernism as an effective city-making tool.

In Boston, regulators responded to the clamor from both building professionals and citizenry urging that new construction in older districts be more contextual. This stance forced a headlong retreat into the reassuring womb of familiar shapes and materials, with a particular affection for warm, red brick. As an unintended consequence of these reactionary goings-on, however, we began for the first time to understand those specific physical attributes that make Boston unique among American cities — a mosaic of dense mixed uses, a lively inner harbor, and well-defined, animated streets that are the disheveled nerve centers of civic life and the arch enemy of the Modern.

While Post-Modernism has mercifully faded, it has left a significant bequest to the future of Boston in areas like the unbuilt Seaport: a richer understanding of city-making. And so one can imagine that the lowly brick, once deposited here unceremoniously as ship ballast, later burdened with the task of ensuring a humane and urbane environment, can now ease back into a less demanding role as servant to architects' whims. ■■■

Homer Russell is the director of urban design at the Boston Redevelopment Authority.

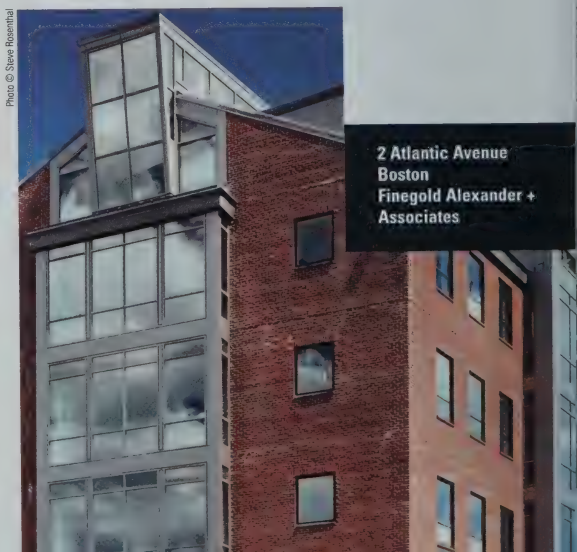


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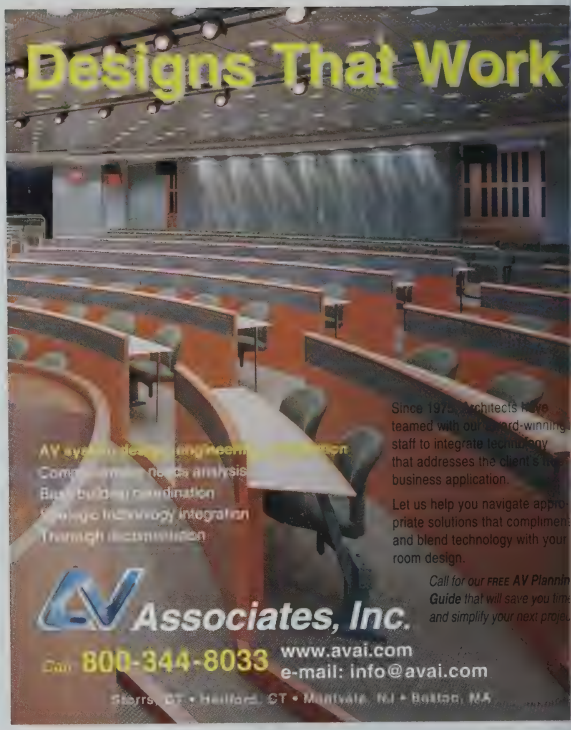
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Material Concerns

Brian Healy AIA talks with Jane Weinzapfel FAIA





Jane Weinzapfel FAIA is a principal of Leers Weinzapfel Associates in Boston.



Brian Healy AIA is the principal of Brian Healy Architects in Boston.

Healy: The theme of the architecture program at this year's Venice Biennale is "Less aesthetics, more ethics." It suggests that a lot of design has become overly self-referential and style-conscious and that the role of design has been trivialized as a result. Would you agree with that?

Weinzapfel: No. We need to pay more attention to both aesthetics *and* ethics. There's an important place for aesthetics in every project — the germ of the aesthetic is most often in the reason for the project in the first place. But I don't personally find architecture to be an abstract art, removed from ideas of use, ideas of place, and ideas of materiality. That notion is not on my screen. On my screen is the idea of an architecture that is as complete as possible. In any case, the Biennale theme is probably colored by a European outlook. There are so many architects, particularly in Italy, relative to the actual amount of construction undertaken there. It's very different in the United States, where we have a lot of building, very little of which is designed by architects. Now, of course, we're seeing a number of architects from Europe and other parts of the world who are working in Boston. I think that's refreshing.

Healy: I agree — it will energize the local design community. Boston has a reputation for being conservative, but the truth is that it has always been open to European influences, allowing new ideas to filter through. To some extent, this attitude keeps chauvinistic American chest-thumping at bay — we have less of a cultural link to the Wild West than we do to Europe. We're still in a position to learn something from European architects such as the Portuguese and the Spanish — about how to integrate new buildings into a dense urban fabric while retaining a respect, not just for the past, but for the present, too. Europeans seem to have a greater commitment to the way things are built, in terms of their materiality, scale, and craft.

Weinzapfel: I've been thinking about these issues in terms of the "properly lasting" and the "properly expendable." We don't think in terms of materials lasting 500 years, as you might in Portugal. I imagine the American ideal would be that each architect would consider how long the work at hand was supposed to survive and then plan the detailing and the materials to sustain the building for twice that time period. The client is not going to want it to be built for 500 years if it will be replaced in 30. Of course, thinking in those terms poses certain ethical issues. If the

uilding is then not replaced in 30 years, what's the bligation to the neighborhood and the rest of the ommunity for its remaining life?

ealy: That's a good point. We just finished enovating a building here in Boston that was given a ifespan of five, maybe 10 years. And at the other xtreme, we're renovating an historically significant ffice building from the turn of the last century. he two projects highlighted that issue for us. I uspect architects embrace timelessness a little too uickly, rather than acknowledging the true life of he building. At the same time, I think that ew Englanders in general tend to think in terms f the long haul, to think that things should be one the right way because otherwise you're going to ave a bigger problem down the road. It's not ecessarily stylistically driven, but it indicates a spect for quality. It's all part of breathing and aging New England — allowing buildings a certain gnity.

einzapfel: And I think we are lucky to have that ankee spirit. I especially enjoy working with clients ho share those values. They tend to be very savvy out the issues of maintenance costs versus first sts, especially in materials. They can't always afford hat they would like, but they know how to make asonable choices. And these are important deci- ons, because materials and craft are the ways that ost people first experience a building. People react mediately to the materials, the color, the texture, e light, and how the building is put together.

ealy: It's a visceral response.

einzapfel: Yes. It's also what they will remember out the building. Next are the scale and the size. ople remember if it was small scale or monumental - big as a barn, small as a mouse hole. And then hink they respond to its practicality — whether it's sy to find their way around, easy to use. They n be quite verbal about that. But in general, they spond to beauty. They might describe the build- g's proportions, or its relation to nature, or even its uctural qualities. But they are responding to some finition of beauty.

ealy: Is it because these things give a sense of mfort?

Weinzapfel: Comfort *and* discomfort. Sometimes the reaction is unconscious, and sometimes it's even unpredictable. There are some people who really like dark ceilings, for example, and others who find them oppressive. But people are quite aware of their surroundings, of the beauty of materials, of the practicality of use, and of the perceived quality in the way things are put together.

Facing page:
MBTA Operations Control Center
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Healy: Let's talk a little about "the way things are put together." Some architects try to pump up the perceived quality of their buildings by accessorizing them — like adding a brooch. This often leads to buildings that are both self-conscious and overwrought.

Let's say you're working on a building. There are certain compositional elements that you think are necessary, and you're trying to integrate into the design. But there is often a very fine line between an element that has an essential quality and one that is mere appliqué — a canopy or a cornice, for example. We put cornices on buildings 100 years ago. No one takes exception to them, even if they're just tacked-on copper panels, because they're there for what I'm sure the architect considered an essential reason. A modern architect who is interested in contemporary building techniques might pick a similar strategy. But how do you distinguish between the decorative and the essential?

Weinzapfel: I would say expressive elements are essential if they are subordinate to a larger architectural idea. A canopy, to continue with that first example, might be expressive of the idea of entry and therefore subordinate to a very important aspect of the building. It is not decorative, it's essential. If there is a cornice, and it is important to the proportional layering system of the building, I would consider it essential. Expressive elements are very important in buildings. I'm not sure I have a problem with decorative elements. But I would probably define a decorative element as nonessential, as one that could be removed without being missed or changing the building's meaning.

Healy: So you're not a purist.

Weinzapfel: I'm not a purist, except in the sense that I feel there should be an expressive purpose. And once I can articulate what that expressive purpose is, then the building is mute without it.

Healy: Which would support your earlier comments about beauty — which is rarely talked about and usually dismissed as less significant or less serious than some other concerns. Elements of beauty — material selection, proportion, and compositional elements — are in fact integral to any concept.

Weinzapfel: And very often clients also perceive the essential quality of these expressive elements. There's just no discussion. If client says, "Oh, could we take those off?" and you can say, "Sure," then they weren't essential to begin with. If the client says, "What's all this about?" and you can't convey the essential importance, then there's something wrong.

Materials can also have an expressive quality, even within the limited palette we tend to use in this area. Architects in some other parts of the country, like the Northwest, tend to allow themselves a much broader palette. It can create a stunning richness.

Healy: But there is a difference between the material and the craft. Craft addresses the way things go together. I suspect that buildings in the Northwest are often very highly crafted. I tend to think that's less true in Boston. In any case, I think architects are still dancing around the preconceptions that we've inherited from the Modernists and their understanding of how buildings and cities should go together. It's fascinating to listen to people talking about the integrity of a building. Everybody seems to know exactly what that's supposed to mean. But if you ask them to demonstrate what that looks like — how they interpret "integrity" in their work — you get very different responses. People build differently, and they often build the way they need to, in order to get their project built. But the *idea* of the integrity of a particular material still haunts us. Maybe that's a good thing.

Weinzapfel: Integrity is often expressed through craft. It might, for example, be expressed in the clarity of an exposed steel section bolted to a plate that grounds it to a piece of concrete. All of that is visible and understandable. I can understand it, and a five-year-old can understand it.

Healy: Now you are sounding like a Modernist.

Weinzapfel: I think that kind of clarity is deeply satisfying. It's certainly satisfying to me, and it was satisfying to people in the Middle Ages who could understand the function of stone buttresses because they could see it, and it's satisfying to a five-year-old with an Erector set. We all understand gravity. And you can see that kind of clarity as you walk around the city. We can look at old embankments and see big blocks of stone piled one on another. We know they're doing a job, and we know hov they're doing it. It's satisfying to know. Now we're seeing veneer systems, and it's kind of spooky to see bricks that look like beams. Maybe most people don't think about it too much, but once you start looking closely at these things and thinking abou them, you can find pleasure in an expression of a lintel that shows an understanding of the properties of masonry. It's also true of newer materials — metal, veneer stone, structural glass. We want to see how they work.

Healy: But if you say that brick was once used only as a bearing material and therefore shouldn't be used in any other way, I think you've imposed an unfortunate limitation. Is it somehow a lie to use brick as a veneer?

Weinzapfel: No. I am saying this is an opportunity. If you use brick, you can still find ways to use it that are satisfying. I do think there is a human satisfaction in understanding the way materials are used in construction.

Now, of course, architects are exploring many new materials and building technologies. It raises new issues. How do we both advance building construction and expressive architecture on th one hand, and on the other, meet our responsibility to be sure that what we build works well, is technically competent, and ha longevity? That's a real challenge. It humbles me every time I undertake a new building. ■■■



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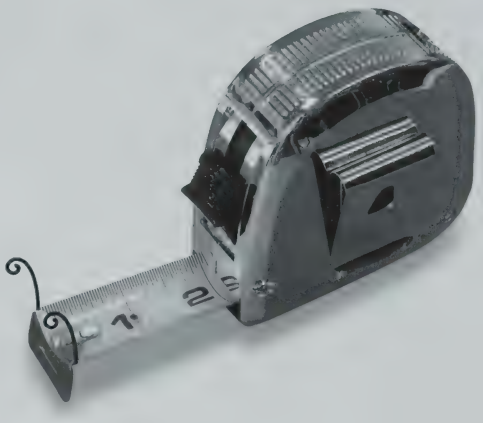
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Letter from Cincinnati

A Field Guide to Meta-Narratives

by Brenda Case Scheer AIA

I am often asked how I like the new Aronoff addition to the University of Cincinnati College of Design, Architecture, Art and Planning, designed b Peter Eisenman. After all, I work there every day and I am an architect. Well, that's easy: I like it. It's airy and spacious, visually engaging, and reasonably functional. But, most important of all, it is entertaining to talk about.

One of my colleagues quipped, "Everywhere you look, the building asks a question." The building may be busy asking questions, but visitors usually have only one: "Huh?" The building is so visually complicated (and expensive), you figure there must be a good explanation for it. Mr. Eisenman has cleverly avoided providing us with an answer, variously proclaiming his interest in "Lightness," "Tracings," "Otherness,"and even "the Body."

With such an insistent question and no clear answer, architecture critics and famous architects have been left to debate the issue, which leads to magazine and newspaper articles, and (hello!) fame As the coy Eisenman stands by, trendy visitors fror both coasts ("Men in Black Shirts," we call them here in Ohio) parade through with cameras, inexorably enticed to play this entertaining game.

Unfortunately, despite trying really hard, no one has come up with a genuinely useful theory, i.e., one that actually explains what is going on. The Post-Structural, Deconstructed, Alternative Readings are all very well for intellectual players, but I have a real dilemma on my hands: What am I going to tell prospective students, visitors, and other normal folk? The answer came to me one da as I was guiding an unsuspecting Kentucky family through the Architectural Wonder of the decade.



truggling hopelessly to answer their shrugs of incomprehension, decided finally to forgo the "Tracings" stuff and just make omething up. Visibly relieved by my plausible explanation, they odded in approval and admiration. Since then, I've been a very onvincing tour guide, and I've learned to tailor my theories the audience of the moment. Here are some of my favorites, hich I've filed under "Plausible Meta-Narratives about The ronoff Center that Anyone can Understand."

he Parking Garage Theory: In this explanation, I tell people ie Aronoff addition is actually not a new building at all, but an daptive re-use of a former parking garage. This is why there is a ng, dramatic ramp from an inconsequential parking lot. The vkward but spacious internal circulation, the trapezoidal rooms, id the odd kilter of the exterior façade are all results of this ventive re-use. This theory also explains the noisy and low-ilinged seminar rooms, the generous unusable space, and the eap materials.

like to use this theory when I'm talking to taxpayers from hio, since it allows us to appear both thrifty and innovative.

ie Shopping Mall Theory: In this theory, forward-looking UC lministrators have cleverly prepared for the eventual demise of ose high-maintenance and pretentious architecture, design and t programs. The Aronoff building is actually a turn-key project vised by a developer, who will someday convert it to an oscale shopping mall. The University can thus make mountains money out of what is now a net-loss situation. Among other sign features, this theory explains the basic concept of the ilding, which is an inwardly focused, multi-tiered, central tium looking down on a food court. The dean's office has eady started to display T-shirts for sale in its "shop windows," aking the ready conversion to a Gap store even more plausible. eckon Armani needs only a wire mannequin to take over the nning art gallery (better stock plenty of black shirts).

ie circulation through the building is disorienting enough that oppers will be forced to walk much farther than they really need to, just like in a real mall. The classy, attention-getting exterior needs only a large lighted sign to make this work, although I do think it will be hard to lease the top floor.

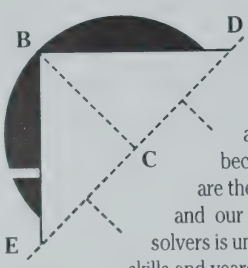
Both liberals and conservatives find this theory convincing. For liberals, this explanation reinforces their anxiety about the Death of Art. Conservatives like it, because, well, it's such a neat idea.

Help! I'm Stuck in '80s TV Theory: If classical architecture can be described as frozen music (as Goethe fans endlessly remind us), the Aronoff addition is frozen TV — unfortunately, frozen in 1988, the year the building was actually designed. This was the year of in-your-face, whites-only MTV, and the beginning of all that computer-generated title stuff — the rectangles and type-faces that rotate, zoom, slide, and fold before slipping away. Weird camera angles, nervous cinematography, and Miami Vice colors (it's been 12 years, OK?) complete the inspiration. This theory explains the ease of transforming the building directly into letter-head (try that with St. Peter's). People from France love this story, and most print reporters are gullible enough to buy it, too.

I could go on, telling you about the "Required Too Much Memory"theory (for techno-heads), the "Crashed Jetliner" theory (a student choice) and the ever-popular "Medici Wannabe" theory (odds-on faculty favorite), but this is such a fun game, I think we should let everyone play, not just the pros. If you, dear reader, have a Plausible Meta-Narrative That Anyone Can Understand, please write to me at University of Cincinnati. Right now I'm in the market for theories that are appropriate for feminists, National Guardsmen, or members of the Modern Language Association. Remember, there are no rules and ANY reading is as valid as the next. Won't you please help? ■■■

Brenda Case (Lightner) Scheer AIA is associate professor of urban design and planning at the University of Cincinnati. She was the director of urban design for the Boston Public Facilities Department (1985-89) and a Loeb Fellow at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. She is the 2000 recipient of the SOM Chicago Institute for Architecture and Urbanism Prize.

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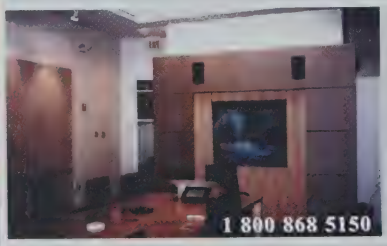
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Two Views

Lots of people complain about the decline of craftsmanship and the increase in a "hands-off" attitude about materials and construction. Here are two people who are doing something about it.

by Robert Adam



Robert Adam is the director of the preservation carpentry program at North Bennet Street School in Boston.

Traditionally trained craftsmen are difficult to find in the building trades. The majority of people working in the trades today have little or no formal training. Long-term apprenticeships are rare, and secondary and post-secondary trade schools that once offered courses in construction have changed their focus to technical training or preparation for careers as support staff in the service economy. Most workers are trained on the job and are likely to have major gaps in their skills and overall understanding of their trade. Few choices are available for traditional training.

If the workers have changed, so has the nature of the work itself. Traditional craft has become a lost form; the modern carpenter crafts very little. Hand tools are few and are often limited to those carried in a tool belt or drywall bucket. Most job-site tools have either plugs or batteries, and the use of hand tools is met with suspicion. Building materials have become standardized into modular systems of assembled components, and the process of building has become one of installation rather than construction. The quality of workmanship depends more on the quality of manufacturers' standards than those of on-site workers. Even so, the standards of acceptable workmanship have also substantially diminished. The quality of fit and finishes has degenerated to appalling levels, with caulking a universal remedy. We have accepted this "dumbing down" of standards to the point that high-quality workmanship goes unrecognized.

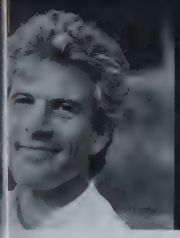
The good news is that traditional skills and craftsmanship are in demand today for work on historic buildings. Preservation has become a major niche market and continues to grow each year. Modern materials and practices, however, are often unsuitable for historic buildings. Preservation solutions require appropriate materials with a blend of traditional and contemporary skills. The preservation community has been keenly aware of this and has long supported in-service training for workers to increase their knowledge of historic issues. These programs have generally been successful but, because they are usually structured as seminars, their impact on craftsmanship is limited.

The teaching of traditional trades and craftsmanship is complex. Training begins with learning a mix of historic and modern skills — and developing an attitude about work that matures over a lifetime. Traditional woodworkers, for example, must acquire three major skill sets: the mastery of hand tools, layout, and the processes that organize work. The care and use of sharp tools is the basis for understanding craftsmanship; without keen edges, the process of cutting and shaping material accurately is impossible. (This concept has unfortunately been lost on the modern "plug in" carpenter.) Layout is another important basic. Without accurate layout, pieces do not fit, regardless of how keen the tool's edge. Layout skills develop the spatial senses necessary to envision all building. And, finally, an understanding of process is developed from the assembly of many tool skills and is essential to the development of efficient work. The concept of "what comes first" and the sequences of operation are sometimes difficult to grasp. Continued practice of these basics leads to the recognizable qualities we appreciate as workmanship.

Craftsmanship, however, goes beyond workmanship and quality. It is an attitude that is learned through experience and developed over a lifetime. It is a continuum of perfecting ways to do good work that encompasses all facets of the trade. And at its highest level, craftsmanship connotes an unswerving integrity, based in precision, discipline, and dedication to attaining the highest-quality workmanship.

Everyone in the construction industry today talks about the need for more workers. But we also need more traditional craftsmen — men and women — who should be recognized not only for the quality of their work but also as examples of productive individuals who find satisfaction in their dedication to quality. Craftsmanship can make a difference.

Hands-On: Teaching Craft



by John Connell

ohn Connell, a practicing rchitect/builder, is the ounder of Yestermorrow chool in Warren, VT.

Since the beginning of my brief membership in the architecture profession 25 years ago, I have heard essentially the same gripes: Architects don't get enough respect. Clients don't understand what we bring to the job. We don't get paid enough. We are being replaced by engineers, builders, and non-licensed "designers." People just don't appreciate real architecture.

To the many theories offered to explain our woeful situation, I would like to add mine: I think we have simply drifted too far from the "tecture" in "architecture." To explain: "arch" comes from Latin and Greek roots meaning "chief" or "most important"; "tect" means building. Architecture is a building that rises above the normal. It must be an unusual, exceptional building. Note that it is not merely a formal geometry, or an historical school of ornament, or a computer model, or even a clever idea. Architecture can not exist unless there is an actual building. Indeed, the early forebears of our profession were called masterbuilders.

We all know that in the early part of the 20th century, the profession sought to distance itself from the construction site. This was such a crazy idea that it took almost 75 years and a couple of world wars for architects to get used to it. But slowly it came to pass. By the time I entered the profession, most architects couldn't remember a time when architects were intimate with the construction process. Few had ever built anything larger than a chair.

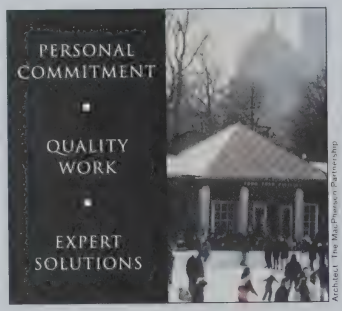
My bias on this point is well known. I started the Yestermorrow Design/Build School in 1980 specifically to redress this situation. I have taught design/build to architecture students from all corners of the country. I am pleased to say that they acquire the principles and craft of building like a drowning man figuring out how to row a life boat. Imagine — if you will bear one more metaphor to describe most design programs — a music school where the students are urged to write music, study the history of music, listen to music, follow the works of great musicians, debate the meaning of music, but never actually play music! That's how we train our young architects.

Having beat this drum for more than two decades, I already know a couple of the more popular rebukes: Modern materials and methods make it impractical to relate to building as a craft. Tall buildings using glass walls and elaborate structural systems simply don't allow the architect to have a hands-on role. Most new houses today are manufactured in factories, not built on site. (Consider all the mobile, modular, and log houses in America.) Codes, unions, and finances have more to do with the way a building is erected than anything the architect might bring to the process. And besides, think of the liability….

I am not suggesting that we return to some medieval tradition of masterbuilders or hammering foremen. Architects are appropriately based in the studio where they can creatively solve design problems. Drawings, models, and computers are excellent tools for understanding the building as an abstraction. But even the most brilliant design is dependent on the materials and the assembly process for its realization. Without a deep, intuitive understanding of materials, methods, and craft, the architect's abstractions will necessarily be void of any real meaning.

Even if young architects pour concrete, weld steel, hang sheathing, or lay up bricks but once, their architecture will be informed by these experiences for the rest of their lives. Framing up a house, tipping up walls, raising the roof — these are archetypal steps in the process of making space. But if our architecture schools continue to deliver young professionals without any real understanding of the craft of construction, we will face the ultimate irony: our buildings will remain less satisfying than the handmade models that sold the project in the first place. ■■■

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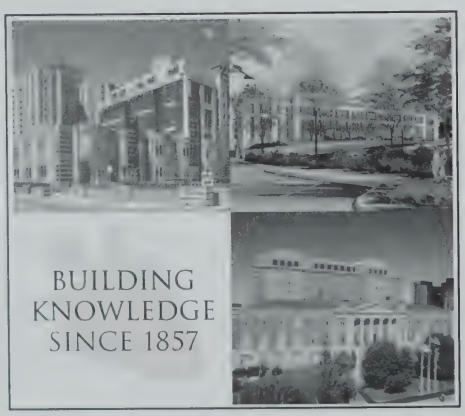
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Covering the Issues

Periodical roundup

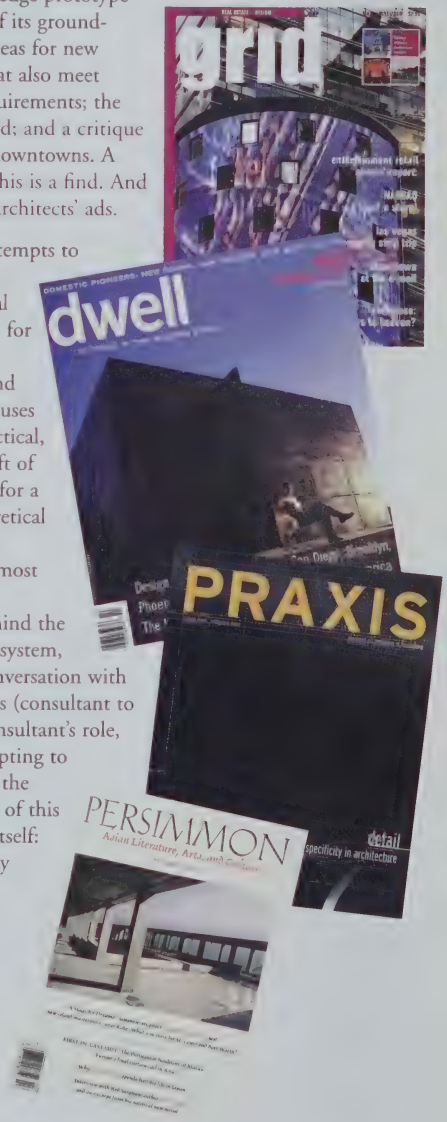
by Gretchen Schneider

New kids on the block... "Maybe you've seen them from afar: those funny people in the even funnier glasses, a roll of drawings tucked under one arm like a talisman to ward off the wrong impression ('I'm not a mere businessman, I'm an artist!'). Or maybe you've seen them up close, even spoken to one, and discovered for yourself the strange contradictions of the architect: generally creative, often competent, but nursing some deep pain." So dubiously begins *Dwell*'s insights to architects (premiere issue, October 2000). This new bimonthly magazine by non-architects for a general audience states they're on a mission to de-bunk myths, show real-life, lived-in Modernism, and foster a broad, public dialogue, asking, "How can we best build our homes to respond to the cultural changes that take place? And, how do we do this in a way that fulfills our deep longing for home to be a place of meaning and beauty?" We with the funny glasses say best of luck, and welcome.

Cookies abound... We also welcome *Persimmon*, a new quarterly journal of "Asian literature, arts, and culture." In the cover story of the Summer 2000 issue, Japanese architect Kazukiyo Matsuba examines the career of Tadao Ando in the context of his most recent work, the Awaji Yumebutai complex, while also describing the broader context of Japanese social and architectural practices. In writing that is both intelligent and accessible, Matsuba describes themes that run throughout Ando's work, the ideas behind this vast new conference center-hotel complex, and the experience of being there. In another article, historian Jonathan Porter asks, "Can Macau's cultural heritage survive?" He argues that architecture is an important remnant from this city's long, complicated history and worthy of being preserved. As we near the first anniversary of Macao's handover to China, Porter laments that proponents of the new continue to wantonly destroy the old Portuguese buildings. Yet he argues that "museumification" is not quite the right answer either. It's interesting to watch familiar questions play out half a world away.

Sophomore on the scene... Two-year-old *Grid*, the "Magazine of Real Estate + Design," is a trade magazine for real-estate professionals focusing on issues of physical design. The May/June 2000 issue claims to discuss entertainment retail. Be forewarned: That's only the beginning. An impressive array of articles examines Gehry's proposal for the southern Manhattan Guggenheim; Cornerstone Real Estate's renovation of the landmark 1914 Candler Tower; Steelcase's cutting-edge prototype "P" office building, an extension of its groundbreaking Pathways product line; ideas for new realities of dot-com office space that also meet ludicrous schedule and budget requirements; the value of real space in a virtual world; and a critique of southern California's "instant" downtowns. A design ideas mag for developers? This is a find. And you can't help but smile at all the architects' ads.

Praxis makes perfect... *Praxis* attempts to make obvious that moment "when the design idea engages the material reality of built form." By architects for architects, this new tri-annual publication investigates ideas around changing themes; the first issue focuses on "detail." At once artful and practical, case-study articles celebrate the craft of architecture. Lest this be mistaken for a mere trade publication, more theoretical musings get tossed in, too. They're unnecessary. Most engaging is the most real: the story of the complex interdisciplinary design process behind the still futuristic-looking D.C. Metro system, for example, or Ben Gilmartin's conversation with curtain-wall expert Robert Heintges (consultant to Pei and Portzemparc) about the consultant's role, specific properties of glass, and adapting to different building practices around the world. Yet the most pleasing aspect of this magazine is perhaps the magazine itself: thoughtful and coherent, beautifully assembled, and graphically sophisticated. ■■■



Gretchen Schneider teaches architecture at Smith College.

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with Laurie Beckelman

March 3 2001
"Architects and the Peace Corps"
with Michael Hicks AIA, Lee Cott FAIA, Charlotte Golar Richie, Gary Graham FAIA and others. (This lecture is at the JFK library.)

March 21 2001
"Boston's Waterfront: The 100-Year Plan"
with Linda Haar

April 18 2001
"Water-Shaped Cities: Rome and Boston"
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"Seeing the World: An Architect's Design Trek"
with Robert Linn

Books

Architectural Ornament: Banishment and Return

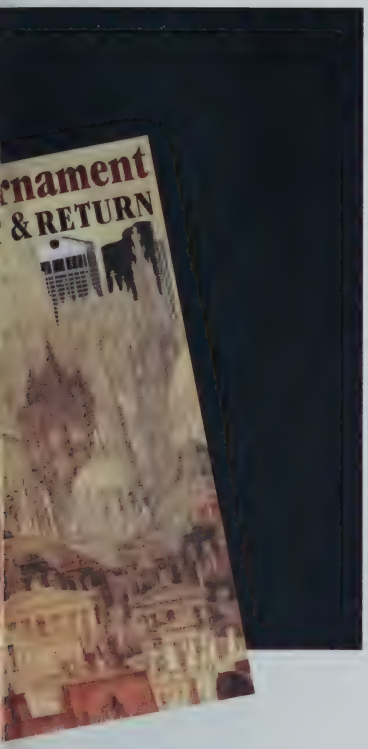
By Brent Brolin
W.W. Norton, 2000

Reviewed by
William Morgan

When Brent Brolin's *Flights of Fancy* appeared 15 years ago, it passed much unnoticed. As with his 1976 book, *The Failure of Modern Architecture*, the establishment simply ignored him — Peter Blake and Tom Wolfe got better press. The good news is that Brolin's 1985 treatise on the return of ornament has itself returned, newly revised and updated.

Brent Brolin is that rare architect who knows his architectural history and who knows how to write. *Architectural Ornament* has a lot of good information, it sustains its thesis throughout, and it is mercifully free of architect-speak. In tackling some of the most fundamental issues of design, Brolin combines history with a sense of mission. The writing is not pretentious but to the point: "Modern architects generally choose to ignore their surroundings … It is euphemistically called 'contrasting the new with old'," he writes of Pei's Grand Pyramid.

Architectural Ornament is really two books: a history of the uses of decoration, and Brolin's interpretation on the death and re-birth of embellishment in modern times.



he first is quite ambitious, as Brolin views Vitruvius' rules of proportions vhich we would do well not to forget) id explains the morality baggage equeathed us by Ruskin and Pugin bout the appropriateness of materials id their "honest" use. He notes Kant's fluential and damaging pronounce- ents on taste, originality, and the artist- -hero, which, alas, encouraged the oliferation of arrogant egos like Mies, orbu, and Wright.

olin's exegesis on William Morris, the rystal Palace, the Arts and Crafts ovement, and Walter Gropius covers miliar ground, but this crucial material ars repeating and his discussion is easily gested. After all, not many architects ve time to read — and if they do, they e unlikely to turn to Hogarth's treatise beauty, Semper's diatribe against the e of iron, or Viollet-le-Duc's complaints out the deceitfulness of pediments related to structure.

More fun, and maybe more effective, is Brolin's commentary — primarily the images he has gathered as ammunition to fire at the barrenness and stupidity of much recent architecture.

The Yale-trained architect gets right to heart of the matter: "The professional press routinely castigates Robert Stern — because his buildings usually look as though they belong next to their architectural neighbors — and fawn over designers like Frank Gehry and Daniel Libeskind, whose work, if it does not recall past architecture, does suggest past entrepreneurs like P.T. Barnum."

He then juxtaposes images of the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao with the broken-up design of an athletic shoe. The side-by-side comparison of Christian de Portzamparc's new LVMH Tower in New York and William Van Allen's Chrysler Building is a trickier sell. Although Brolin notes, "Fortunately, Art Deco designers remained unaware of the Modernist dictum that the spirit of the time demands the end of ornament," he runs the danger of appearing to damn all modern buildings. A lot of Post-Modern buildings, including de Portzamparc's, look anemic, but is it fair to compare, say, Graves with Cram or Stern with Daniel Burnham? Times change. Although humans crave ornament, the great carvers of Romanesque France or even the craftsmen of Georgian Revival America will not return simply because we mourn their passing.

It is all too easy to take pot shots at dogmatic Modernists; sometimes their dogmaticism can even elicit sympathy: I knew an architecture student who agonized over the color of his new sports car — white was pure but not machine-like; British racing green was correct for his English car, but green was the color of grass; he decided upon black, but was thrown back into indecision by a girl-friend's remark that black was the color of night. Brolin perhaps overstates his case by showing Harvard's Gund Hall with its neighbors. (What 20th-century building would not fare poorly next to Memorial Hall?) We all know that Carpenter Center's *brises-soleil* make the case for a personal style that has nothing to do with Harvard, Cambridge, or the New England environment. Rather more to the point, Modern architects have been denied the traditional tools of ornament. Is pushing and pulling, bending and twisting, cutting and pasting all that is left to designers seeking to enliven and enrich their building surfaces?

Of course, most people never embraced Modernism. (Ever tried to sell a flat-roofed 1950s "machine for living" on a street of center-hall Colonials?) Brolin smugly comments that "humble folk are usually just biding their time until they have the means to indulge in bourgeois excesses." Maybe Modernism was simply an aberration, a dry season without richness and ornament. But in all good architecture, success depends only in part upon style or ornament: A plain box by Modernists like Heikkinen + Komonen, for example, can be as powerful as a Victorian extravaganza by William Burges or Frank Furness if the materials and proportions are right.

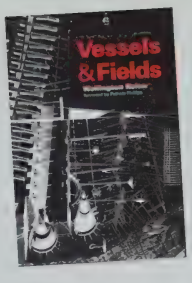
It is hard not to enjoy Brolin's commentary on man's decorative impulse — from the Parthenon to Rockefeller Center — or to relish his polemics. Nevertheless, I had hoped Brolin's ending would put aside thoughts on the Modern Notion of Genius and address the return of vengefully schlocky ornament on the thousands of starter castles and McMansions that are sprouting up everywhere in the ever-new-moneyed America. It's almost enough to make you think that banishing ornament wasn't such a bad idea. ■■■

William Morgan teaches architectural history at Roger Williams University and is the architecture columnist for *Art New England*. He is the author of *Heikkinen + Komonen* (Monacelli Press).

Vessels & Fields

by Wellington Reiter
Princeton Architectural Press, 1999

reviewed by
Paul Stevenson Oles FAIA



Wellington Reiter's first book, *Vessels & Fields*, is a collection of his past (mostly unbuilt) design projects, ranging in scale from room-size to regional. Excluding commissioned works at one end of the spectrum and flights of pure fantasy at the other, the two dozen schemes included here comprise competition submissions, museum installations, and a range of building proposals that address specific, if previously unidentified, urban ills and opportunities. Reiter's passion, as evidenced by this work, is centered in the design of "instruments" rather than a more generic architecture. The dictionary definition of the term — "a means, or agency, by which something is done" — suggests that Reiter is extending the purpose of architecture beyond the default functionality of Vitruvius' "commodity, firmness and delight" to embrace devices which actively *measure, define, recall* or *connect*.

The small (6" by 8") format of this 190-page paperback is almost entirely visual — a "flashbook" that allows the browser to comprehend almost instantaneously much of the nature and scope of Reiter's provocative thinking. Although the pages are divided almost equally between photographs of models or installations and drawings of unbuilt projects, the electrifying effect of the drawn images causes one to come away with the sense that this is solely a book of drawings. The book, however, is not about drawings — arresting as they maybe — but about ideas. It is about contemporary urban culture, and a series of audacious proposals to promote a perceptual shift in the ways history and memory affect social connection.

Still, the drawing does deserve comment, I believe, because of its uniqueness and power. Drawing here is itself an instrument in the service of these proposals. Reiter has evolved a highly personal graphic technique using black ink with pen and brush, which is employed principally for the purpose of investigation rather than presentation. The choice of ink as a medium effectively precludes erasure, so the only way to accommodate a developing idea is to draw more, resulting in the characteristically dense and volatile images that ignite these pages. A frequent counterpoint to the muscularity of the core drawing is a surrounding blizzard of microscopically scrawled notes, criticisms, and alternatives that swarm like insects drawn to a flame. These fragile, left-brain musings complement the graphic impact of the represented form, and deepen the levels of interest and meaning of the core image. It is difficult to view these drawings serially and not be aware of the trenchant intelligence they reveal.

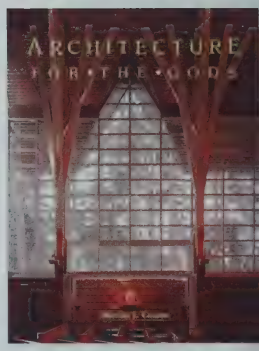
Although this book was assembled as a personal monograph, it has a life of great potential utility to others as a provocative and challenging assertion of visual mythmaking within our contemporary urban context. The author has given us something that we can use — as a goad and as an inspiration. These pages show us the splendid, if often disquieting, perceptions of a designer who can think — a Reiter who can *draw*. ■■■

Paul Stevenson Oles FAIA is an architect/perspectivist and principal of Interface Architects in Newton, MA.

Architecture for the Gods

by Michael Crosbie
Watson-Guptil, 2000
(paperback)
Images Publishing Group, 1999
(hardbound)

Reviewed by
James Hudson Crissman FAIA



Michael Crosbie AIA has produced a beautiful picture book of new religious architecture that will delight anyone who is intrigued by the special qualities of these buildings or who is interested in discovering another window into recent architectural history. This compilation of work from around the Americas represents design at the close of the 20th century.

To understand the evolution in these buildings, only imagine the difference in those that would have been included in a similar 19th-century collection, featuring the work of H.H. Richardson, Henry Vaughan, and Ralph Adams Cram. The most common description in Crosbie's book is "flooded with [or bathed in] light." A century ago, Cram's 1899 classic, *Church Building*, described the virtue of the shadowy, mysterious quality of light in the side aisles of his ideal church.

Certainly the effects of Vatican II have been felt within and beyond the Roman Catholic community, with both positive and negative consequences. Missing in many if not most of these projects is a sense of the ineffable, so masterfully evoked in the Marian Shrine at St. James Cathedral in Seattle. Unfortunately, this space is referenced but not illustrated. Steven Holl's Chapel of St. Ignatius at Seattle University also cries out for more thorough coverage. These shortcomings are presumably due to the author's reliance on text and illustrations supplied by the architects.

An initial curiosity about the book is the choice of its title, *Architecture for the Gods*. The projects presented are Christian, Jewish, and Islamic — all monotheistic faiths recognizing and worshiping the same One True God. Perhaps *Architecture for God* is just not a salable title in the early 21st century. Also odd is the author's comment in his preface that religious buildings do not have to "conform to certain standards of function." There is a great deal of latitude the way that functional requirements of religious spaces can be addressed, but a response to function is at the heart of what makes the space work; these buildings are not just mood pieces.

With its clear and attractive format and high-quality photographs and drawings, *Architecture for the Gods* will find an enthusiastic audience among those interested in the field; it also deserves the attention of congregations about to embark upon a building project. It would have been much more helpful to both audiences if there were more information given on each of the buildings: date of completion; cost; the architect's address; and the names of other artists and artisans involved. Reservations aside, this collection ranging from Ricardo Legorreta's monumental Metropolitan Cathedral of Managua to the artist James Hubbell's tiny and personal Sea Ranch Chapel is a joy to visit and revisit — a welcome addition to many libraries. ■■■

James Hudson Crissman FAIA is a consulting architect whose clients include many religious communities and institutions.

The Chair

by Galen Cranz
W.W. Norton, 1998

Reviewed by
Patrick Hickox

Drawing on history, anthropology, linguistics, and anatomy, Galen Cranz, professor of architecture at Berkeley, takes this most familiar of household objects and makes it foreign.

Cranz reviews the form and history of the chair from Egypt to the modern day. The chair, we learn, is of comparatively recent origin and is hardly universal, used by a minority of the world's people. Most of its function in the past has been ceremonial rather than functional. As it turns out, the chair is woefully designed and is likely, in her view and that of the many experts whom she cites, responsible for a broad array of problems ranging from attention difficulties among schoolchildren to varicose veins. In spite of the utilitarian ideology of the Modern Movement, high-design Modern chairs perform especially poorly (despite some surprising exceptions, such as Le Corbusier's and Charlotte Perriand's *chaise-longue*). But regardless of how many improvements are introduced, any design for the chair may be doomed by the inherent fact, Cranz would argue, that humans need to employ a continually changing variety of distinct postures throughout their day. She offers the modest proposal that humanity might be better off abandoning the chair altogether.

Cranz proffers many contemporary efforts at designs that attempt to address ergonomics; she also provides a series of recommendations for sitting, leaning down, resting, bending, walking, squatting, crawling, as well as suggestions for more healthful office spaces. While I personally was moved to alter my approach to sitting as a result of these ideas, they may not persuade every reader equally. One catches a heavy waft of patchouli.

Finally, Cranz provides a vision of the dream workspace in an orgasmic finale, in which her essay comes out of the closet as a manifesto. As may befall architects using language to save us, sadly, words sometimes fail her, and she ends the book with a stumbling exhortation: "And become your own advocate for body-conscious designs."

In general, however, her writing is lively, if rather didactic, and is laced with humor and erudition. Some readers may be disappointed at the occasional dependence on written description to the exclusion of images — surprising for a teacher of architecture. Cranz has the sociologist's compulsion for quantitative surveys.

Architectural theory of the 20th century has a tendency to be preoccupied with aesthetic and political issues to the disadvantage of functional concerns. This blind spot may play a role in the public and professional dissatisfaction with much of the built world; it probably also contributes to a recurrent infatuation with novel styles that fail to address substantive issues. Let us allow the chair to pose as a microcosm of architecture. This volume — eccentric in its stance, classical in its order of history-critique-manifesto — might then be of service to a broader architectural theory. ■■■

Patrick Hickox is a principal of Hickox Williams Architects in Boston.



Green Architecture

By James Wines
Taschen, 2000

Reviewed by
Andrew St. John AIA

Architects with a social conscience are faced with a dilemma. Making a living depends on an acceptance, at least on the surface, of the status quo. Making a difference means working for long years to change society. In this comprehensive survey of ideas that show promise for an ecologically inspired art of building in the Age of Ecology, James Wines addresses the spiritual poverty of mass culture, created and nurtured by corporate materialism.

Green Architecture is a well-researched and photographed essay, and in recognizing subjective categories of analysis other than the aesthetic, Wines transcends the limited role played by other critics. Architecture throughout history, he notes, is based on treating nature as an adversary. Green architecture has been approached by most critics as one more set of problems to be resolved through advanced technology. "Design standards divorced from ecological responsibility…have forfeited their richest source of ideas and caused incalculable environmental damage," Wines observes.

Contemporary design maintains the illusion that progress is wedded exclusively to technology and economic growth. Machine-age imagery and the subjugation of nature still form the core of most commercial architecture. By contrast, Wines sees an urgent role for architecture to function as both an ecologically responsible and a symbolically communicative presence. Architecture must progress from "ego-centric" to "eco-centric," and architects must accept responsibility for all of the effects of their designs. Architects are best served by "a humble reserve, thoughtful research, and quiet philosophical re-evaluation."

A major theme is the paucity of spiritual content in contemporary architecture. Contrasted with the religious origin of the pyramids, the Acropolis, the Pantheon, and the cathedrals, the barrenness of the present-day approach is striking. Recognizing the inability of the world's anthropocentric religions to offer a holistic and ecologically restorative path, Wines argues that mankind's hope of avoiding annihilation rests in a radical shift in priorities from a human-centered, profit-oriented, materialistic philosophy toward a spiritually based, Earth-centered set of beliefs. With such a foundation, he notes, green architecture can "integrate environmental technology, resource conservation and aesthetic content. Without all three, there is little chance for the creation of enduring architecture."

His review of the state of environmental architecture shows a wide-ranging and flexible understanding: "The key to a sustainable architecture is the creation of bridges that unite conservation technology with an Earth-centric philosophy, and the integration of these forges a new visual language."

Wines addresses an architecture that takes into account people's weariness with looking at computers all day and TV all night. The primary challenge is to enable an environment of people walking, talking, sitting in their doorways, tending their gardens, and breathing clean air. If this book is more about questions than answers, it at least asks many of the right questions. ■■■

In consulting to owners, tenants, and architects, Andrew St. John AIA looks for ways to make the building process work better for all concerned, including the Earth.

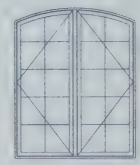


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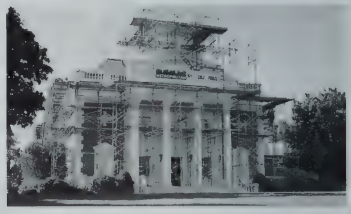
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The Dieste Symposium

http://architecture.mit.edu/events/dieste (no "www")

An ongoing exploration of "innovation in structure and construction with traditional materials." Inspired by the work of Uruguayan engineer Eladio Dieste, the site features beautiful, often sensual, images of work by Dieste and other internationally respected designers. Who needs titanium?

The Hardwood Council

http://www.hardwoodcouncil.com

Advice on selecting hardwood species, tips on flooring, millwork, and finishes. And if the Hardwood Council can't help you, they point you to other trade associations that can.

Preservation Briefs

http://www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm

No, not the latest Calvin undies. This is the online version of the National Park Service's well known reports on building restoration techniques. Click here to learn how to clean graffiti from historic masonry, repair wood roof shingles, or restore that adobe fixer-upper.

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How Stuff Works

http://www.howstuffworks.com/

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Other Voices by Clara Wainright

The Boston Public Library



We all celebrate the Boston Public Library as a glorious marriage of art and architecture, a building whose every surface offers something to delight the senses. We owe this wonderful legacy to the library's architect, Charles McKim, who worked closely with renowned painters and sculptors from America and Europe to incorporate their work into his overall design.

On a hot August afternoon, I came up the great front steps, passing between Bela Pratt's heroic bronze figures of Art and Science, through the Daniel Chester French bronze doors, under Augustus St. Gaudens' seal of the library, up the stairs under the protective gaze of Louis St. Gaudens' pair of stone lions, past the murals of Puvis de Chavannes, and into the Bates Hall reading room.

I sat for a while at one of the reading tables, soaking up the cool of the yellow and gray terrazzo floor, hypnotized by the dozens of green glowing lamps that hovered over the tables. The vastness of the room's physical space was dwarfed by its enormous "mental" space — the tranquility it offered in such stark contrast to the information gold-rush mania of the world outside. I looked at the 10 arched panels along the interior wall that echoed the high windows looking onto Copley Square. In comparison to the richness all around me, these panels were blank, as was a large curved rectangular panel at the Boylston Street end of the room.

Why? What had happened to cause McKim and his collaborators to leave these spaces empty? Tranquility disrupted, I now had a mission.

Upstairs in the fine-arts department, a friendly staff member presented me with the *Handbook of the New Boston Public Library*, published when the building opened. In its pages, I discovered that McKim and Charles Abbott, the president of the library, had offered a commission for the curved panel to James McNeill Whistler over dinner in Paris. But negotiations later went badly and the commission was withdrawn. (Whistler's sketch — Columbus landing, flanked by Queen Isabella of Spain and Queen Elizabeth of England — was recently obtained by the print department.) The commission was then offered to John LaFarge, but this, too, was withdrawn. As for the 10 panels, DeForrest Brush, Frank D. Millet, and Abbott Thayer — prominent American artists of the time — were recommended, with the hope that money could be raised from the public. Perhaps fund-raising became a problem. Or perhaps McKim and Abbot became discouraged over the failures of the Whistler and LaFarge commissions.

I wondered if the start of a new century might offer the opportunity to reconsider art for these spaces. The next day, I called Bernie Margolis, the very accessible new president of the library. He said that he and his trustees had talked about temporary or projected art for these spaces, but in the end felt that their priority should be the Johnson/Burgee addition (the 1973 "new wing"), whose high-ceilinged open spaces, enormous central atrium, and monumental staircase recalling McKim's design were dying for art.

I thought back to First Night 2000 and "Big Night in the Book House," a collaboration organized by poet Steven Ratiner that included Boston poets, Dance Collective, Vox Pop (a world-music ensemble), saxophonist Stan Strickland, and light artist John Powell. The entrance and the atrium of the new wing glowed with images from world literature, and visitors could explore, in the words of Steven Ratiner, "the power of the word in all its manifestations." Last spring, that same space became the site of "The Minotaur's Maze," an interactive installation by young artist Kelly Kaczynski.

Could Bernie Margolis and his trustees consider temporary art for Bates Hall *and* the Johnson/Burgee wing?

I called George Fifield, media-arts curator at the DeCordova Museum and director of the Boston CyberArts Festival. He said that with computers and projectors, cyber-artists can create software for any space. We imagined the Whistler sketch shimmering on the curved wall of Bates Hall. George told me about the Fourth Plinth Project in London's Trafalgar Square. British sculptors have been invited to create temporary works for an enormous plinth — facing three heroic monuments — that has stood empty since 1841 because no one could agree which hero should be commemorated. But now this project and its excellent Web site (www.fourthplinth.com) allow people from all over the world to explore three possible options. "Temporary public cyber-art can act as a model to let people understand what permanent art in that same space would be like," George said.

He and Bernie are going to talk. ■■■

Clara Wainwright, Hon. BSA, is a quilt maker and the founder of First Night and The Great Boston Kite Festival.

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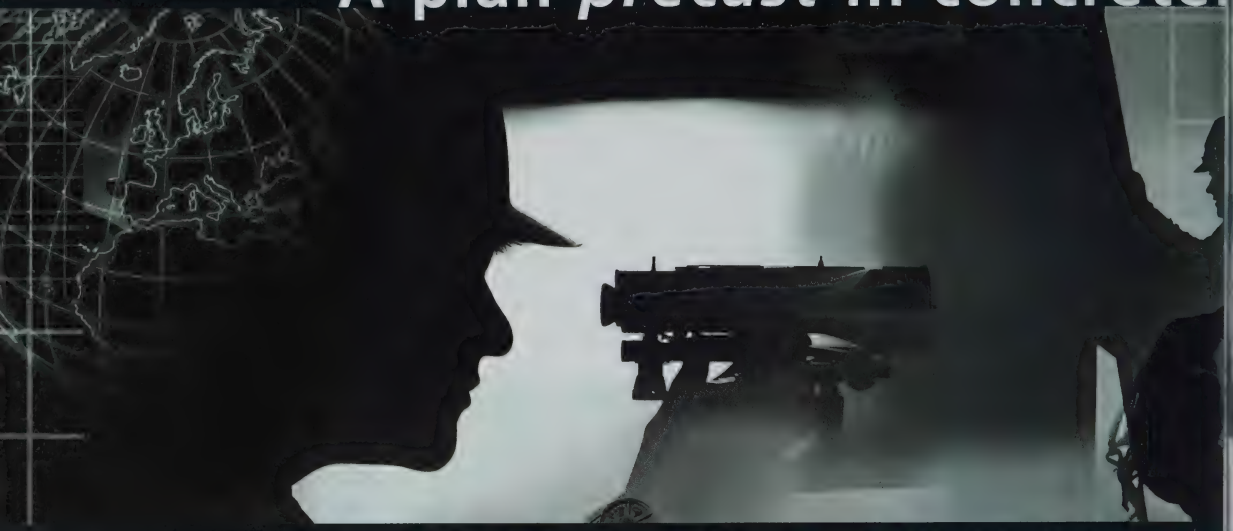


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2000: The Year in Review

The Boston Society of Architects' review of the people and places that influenced design in the year 2000.



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Letter from the Editor

Nobody talks much about the new millennium or the new century anymore — even though the sticklers among us still insist that all the January 1, 2000 hoopla was a year too soon. With all of 1999 devoted to a media frenzy of "best of" lists, ponderous self-reflection, and highly suspect prognostication (remember Y2K?), talk of the new now seems old.

But we shouldn't let the modern virtues of ennui and cynicism keep us from marking occasions of true significance. And so *ArchitectureBoston* has chosen this year to launch a special annual issue — a review of the people and places that have earned our respect and shaped design discourse in our region in the past year. We are especially pleased to present all the projects that have been recognized with design awards from the Boston Society of Architects, the publisher of *ArchitectureBoston*.

This issue is a celebration of design excellence and of all the people who together contribute to the success of a project. We hope you will keep it as a reference, an inspiration, and a resource.

In the last three years, *ArchitectureBoston* has built its reputation as an "ideas magazine," publishing stories that connect architecture to social, cultural, political, and economic trends. Although we have avoided picture-book presentations of individual buildings, we admit to the pleasures of lush photographs of wonderful projects. And so we now take unabashed delight in indulging in images of buildings that are beautiful, provocative, occasionally even difficult — but in all cases worthy of attention.

Elizabeth S. Padjen FAIA
Editor

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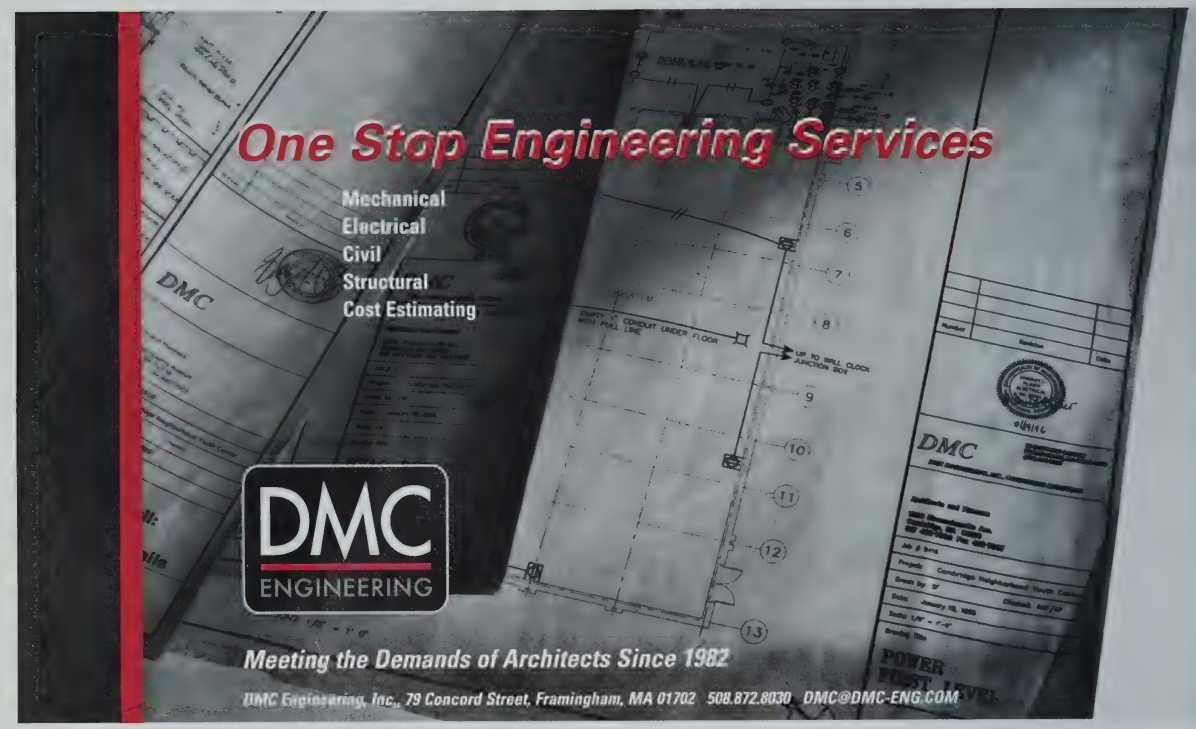
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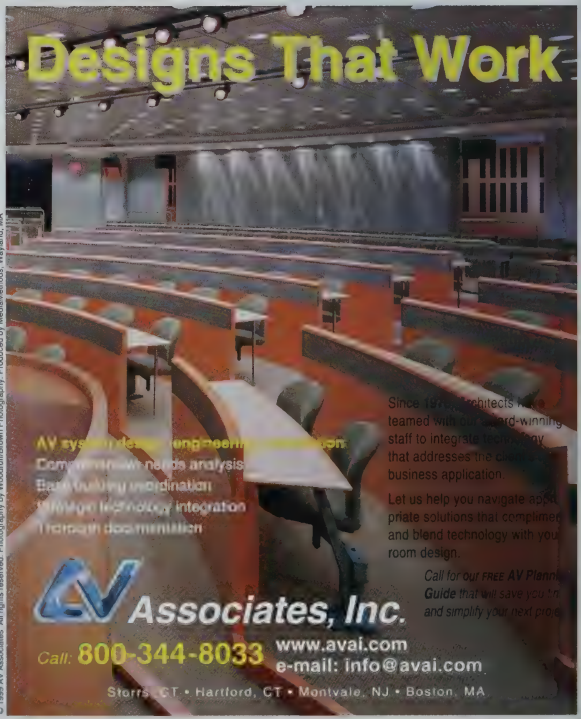
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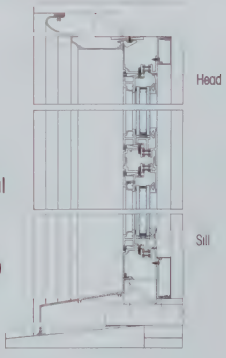
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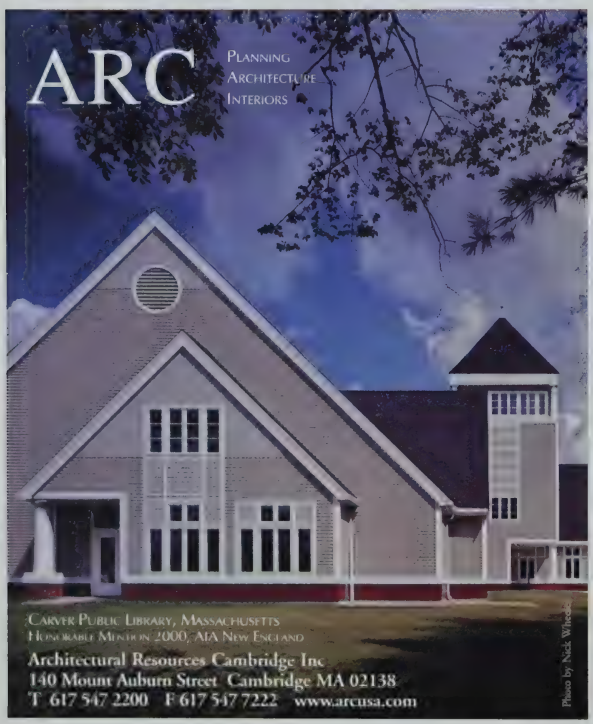


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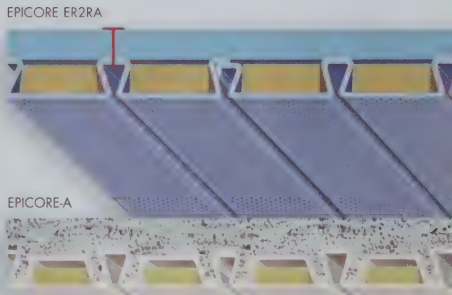
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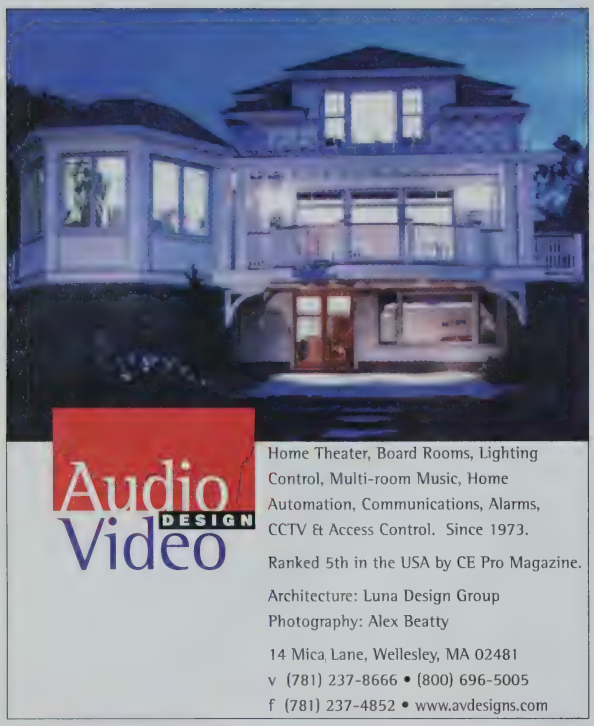
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When Politicians Design: Boston, 2000

by Tom Witkowski

Henry Cobb FAIA of Pei Cobb Freed was the architect of the federal courthouse on Boston's Fan Pier — though critics say the leading voices in the design of the building belonged to federal judges Stephen Breyer and Douglas Woodlock.

Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) planners may have spent years working out the details of how the seaport district will someday look, but many community activists argue that the actual planning has been done by Mayor Thomas Menino, City Council President Jimmy Kelly, state Senator Stephen Lynch, and state Environmental Secretary Robert Durand.

The Old Northern Avenue bridge is the route preferred by the thousands of pedestrians who cross the Fort Point Channel every day. The 90-year-old bridge stands as a monument to Boston's industrial past. But Congressman Joseph Moakley nearly succeeded in forcing the city to tear it down to abide by the terms of the agreement that led to a bland new span nearby, named for his late wife.

The BRA released "A Civic Vision for Turnpike Air Rights in Boston" — an urban-design study led by architects Goody, Clancy & Associates with extensive citizen participation — but the development of that 2.5-mile canyon of highway through the city was very nearly shaped by the autocratic vision of former Turnpike Authority chairman James Kerasiotes — the former Big Dig czar whose strength was never sensitivity to community concerns.

In 2000, Boston architects feared that just as the city was undergoing tremendous economic growth and facing dramatic development from the seaport to the Turnpike air rights to Fenway Park, their voices were being drowned out by the voices of self-interest — politicians, developers, and neighborhood activists. A weakened planning department in the BRA coupled with political leaders prone to second-guessing planners' decisions has resulted in design that too often is the end product of political deals and consensus.

And yet, for all the trepidation that politicians have been doing the actual planning, Boston architects still cry for a strong political voice in the planning and development of the city. They want that voice to transcend the process — the design process, the political process, and the community process — and to articulate a vision like those that built San Francisco, the Back Bay, modern-day Paris, and other heralded examples of urban mastery. Such a voice is needed if Boston is going to grow and evolve successfully in the coming decades, they say.

"Virtually all the cities we admire in the world were built under authoritarian political structures," says Alex Krieger FAIA, chairman of the department of urban planning and design at the Harvard Graduate School of Design and principal of Chan Krieger & Associates.

Once, it was acceptable for a political leader and well-connected developers to articulate and execute their vision for an entire city or neighborhood, but Bostonians today are unlikely to cede such power without protest.

Tom Witkowski has written for *Time*, *The Boston Globe*, and *The Boston Phoenix* and covered development in Boston for *The Boston TAB*. Currently he is a reporter for the *Boston Business Journal*.

When Politicians Design: Boston, 2000

In the past year's political climate, the battles were about control — between the mayor and the city council, and between city and state officials. In the course of the battles, however, whatever vision existed often was blurred. Boston's history has left political leaders gun-shy when it comes to the big picture. The strength of the city's disjointed neighborhood and ward system makes such vision difficult for the city as a whole.

"Dividing the pie makes the pie more manageable. I think that's the Achilles' heel of this city," says Ann Beha FAIA of Ann Beha Associates, an architect who once worked in the East Boston City Hall under the Kevin White administration. **"Boston is a small city, and Balkanization is not fruitful for such a small city. There must be a way to address the larger vision and still acknowledge individual needs."**

Too often in the city's recent past, grand vision has appeared misguided in hindsight. Some of the scars have yet to heal. Boston still mourns the loss of an entire neighborhood to urban renewal when the brick rowhouses of the West End were flattened in the name of revitalizing the city. City Hall was designed to be as powerful architecturally as the Guggenheim Museum is today in Bilbao. But in 2000, City Hall — both the building and its plaza — fell far short of such a goal. The result: Rarely does Boston attempt such grand statements anymore.

"Had probably the best building in Boston, the Hancock Tower, been attempted today, it never would have happened," says developer Ronald Druker.

Indeed, the mistakes of the West End have become the city's legacy as much as the Victorian neighborhood of the South End. **"The BRA has been operating in a 'We're sorry about the West End' mode for 30 years,"** says George Thrush AIA, head of the architecture program at Northeastern University, noting that the agency has been reluctant to plan anything big.

Instead, Boston in 2000 chose a more conservative approach — consensus of the myriad voices being preferable to the leadership of a single voice. Boston became a city where political leaders are not content to articulate a vision and then let a designer follow through, a city where leaders insinuated themselves and the politics of election campaigns and neighborhood issues into the overall planning of the cityscape. Critics argue that the city suffered from an over-democratization of the design and planning process.

"We have an attitude of design-by-consensus that forces buildings in this new millennium to look like buildings developed 150 years ago. They're politically expedient and they're able to get done," says Druker.

The greatest challenge for Boston in 2000 was the planning of the seaport district at the same time that economic and political forces were already developing it. Many disparate voices made even the naming of the neighborhood a minefield. (The formal name, adopted under political pressure, is "South Boston Waterfront" and is almost universally disliked by other neighborhoods.) Disagreement over waterfront access, open space, housing, and massing, and debates over commercial versus residential versus industrial uses led the planning discussion. Meanwhile, the federal courthouse, a hotel, and an office building were already built.

"There are too many voices and they're all kind of canceling each other out," says Krieger. Such a complicated public process made it difficult for the decisive voice of a leader to emerge. **"It is useful at crucial points to have strong voices advancing the process…In this hubbub of everyone speaking out loud, [people] tend to neutralize themselves rather than push an idea forward."**

Those voices should not be silenced. But many architects believe that when the projects are on a larger scale and a part of the public space of the city, such as City Hall Plaza or the Central Artery, those voices need to be properly weighted.

"I think City Hall Plaza is a good example of a process that was exhausted because it was so prolonged," says Beha. "Was [the plaza renovation] slowed down or was it enhanced by the public process?"

"Everything winds up being beige — it's the one color everyone agrees about," says Tim Love, vice president of Machado and Silvetti Associates, which designed the masterplan for the Dewey Square portion of the public space over the Central Artery.

Perhaps the conflict is in how a city should be run versus how it should be built, theorizes Thrush: **"Democracy and architecture are in inherent conflict. Cities should be democratic, but the art of cities may be a different matter."**

The strongest voice in Boston's development and growth in 2000 may have been that of the economy. The financial strength of the city made it very easy to build — and to build on a grand scale. Precisely for that reason, the city and the BRA needed to be strong enough to shepherd the development that growth brings. **"There needs to be a countervailing force to private enterprise. The BRA needs to think big because the forces operating in society are huge,"** says Thrush.

The economy also created a sense of urgency — an apparent need to capture the momentum of the boom before the cycle collapses. The resulting political climate did not allow political leaders to take the time to properly plan the seaport and then let the neighborhood evolve according to that plan. They — and many of the local landowners — wanted the neighborhood to go up over night: Just add water and mix.

"If Boston were willing to have the South Boston waterfront grow over 50 years, they could just say, 'This is the zoning. This is what it's going to be. Mr. McCourt, Mr. Pritzker, you build on your land or not. We are the authority.' But Boston doesn't want to wait 50 years for that to happen — the political exigencies of the day, the go-go economy, the cycles of political leadership are such that they want to get it done," says Thrush. (McCourt and Pritzker are two major landowners in the neighborhood.)

And as long as the strong economy allowed the city to prosper in the past year, a lack of vision may not have been obvious. **"One of Boston's problems is that it doesn't appear to be as broken as it might,"** says Beha. "Something very interesting about a robust economy is that it allows people to look away from pressing needs because their own needs are satisfied."

But it has been easy for architects to criticize from outside the political realm. For instance, many designers and community activists argued that the new seaport neighborhood will not have enough housing, creating a business district that turns into a ghost town after 5 PM. Politicians, however, saw the neighborhood in terms of changing demographics and voter constituencies — a sudden influx of new residents that could dilute traditional political powerbases. "[Architects] don't have to work with the same political and financial realities we do," says Susan Elsbree, spokesperson for the BRA. Criticized for staff reductions that left a weak planning department to contend with the city's current growth, and for the internal conflict of its dual role as the city's economic development agency, the BRA in 2000 bolstered its planning side. In the latest showdown between City Hall and South Boston, the mayor and the BRA appear to have been successful in wresting control of the waterfront plan.

"We're listening to South Boston. We're making sure what goes into South Boston takes the best of what they say," says BRA director Mark Maloney. "They're not happy I took control, but it's my control and I need to have it here. **We have to take self-interest out of the conversation. We have to let people express their opinions.** We have to take what's best of their opinions."

Elsbree comments: **"We have to balance the needs of the developers with the needs of the residential community, with the marketplace. Our best day is when no one's happy. That means no one's run away with the store."**

But does that also mean no one will be able to aspire to the greatness once allowed in the building of cities? Could a Bilbao happen in Boston? A new Fenway Park could be such a landmark, but political, financial, and nostalgic realities make that highly unlikely. Maloney thinks the Institute of Contemporary Art proposal for the waterfront would be the greatest opportunity for such dramatic success. "I'd expect it to be daring, creative, imaginative," he says.

Tim Love is not one to allow architects to absolve themselves of poorly designed buildings and spaces. Blaming a politician or the too many people who have too much say is little more than a cop-out, he says: **"It's the responsibility of the architect to carefully listen to the constituents of a project, to have all those things add up to a greater whole and not just treat them unfiltered."**

Nor is Krieger willing to allow the politicians and developers to be the scapegoats for bad design. Architects and planners, he says, must remember that historically they have never led the way.

"Do you think the pope did not influence Michelangelo at the time he was painting the Sistine Chapel?" asks Krieger. "We have the Sistine Chapel as a result. We forget all the politics behind it." ■■■

Social Works

Robert Campbell FAIA talks with M. David Lee FAIA

Recipient, 2000 BSA Award of Honor



Photo: Ben Watkins



M. David Lee FAIA

is the recipient of the 2000 Boston Society of Architects Award of Honor, in recognition of his service to the profession. A principal of Stull and Lee in Boston, he directs planning, urban design, and architectural projects. He served as president of the Boston Society of Architects in 1992, and recently chaired the Citizens Advisory Committee appointed by Mayor Thomas Menino to create a civic vision and guidelines for the development of air rights over the Massachusetts Turnpike in Boston. He is an adjunct professor in urban design at the Harvard Graduate School of Design.



Robert Campbell FAIA

is a writer and architect in Cambridge, Massachusetts. In 1996 he received the Pulitzer Prize for Distinguished Criticism for his work as architecture critic of *The Boston Globe*.

Campbell How did you get interested in architecture?

Lee I grew up in Chicago, South Side. There was a movie program that used to come on TV on Friday nights. One of the sponsors was a group called Community Builders — they remodeled houses mostly. And they ran these commercials with a guy who, to an eight- or nine-year-old, seemed older than God. He was probably about 40. He would show a Chicago bungalow, for example, and go down in the basement and show how they'd created a recreation room, as they were called in those days. And it would have a pool table and a bar and a television and all of that. I tell you, it was great. Sometimes he'd have a model and show how they might enclose a porch or add a dormer or a wing. And then he would have these before-and-after photographs of what this thing looked like. A dark, dingy basement, and then, all of a sudden, this bright, clean place with everybody sitting around having a great time. I thought that was very, very cool.

Campbell What kind of school education did you have?

Lee My mother was a schoolteacher in a little community called Robbins, Illinois. At the time, they had in effect a quota on the number of African-American teachers in the Chicago public schools. And so she ended up teaching in this little, basically Negro town adjacent to the steel mills. I started school there. Later, I went to school in Chicago at a time when the public schools were still pretty good. There was order in the schools, and there were teachers who cared, teachers who encouraged you.

Campbell What did your father do?

Lee My father was an instrument maker for the U.S. Geological Survey. He was one of the most brilliant people I've ever known. Unfortunately, he died when I was 19. I remember when he passed away and I was going through his effects — it was at that very impressionable time of my life when I was reading stuff like John Dos Passos' *U.S.A.* trilogy. Going through his stuff, I found out he had been reading Dos Passos and that he actually had wanted to be an architect, which I didn't know until then. Although he had been very encouraging — he showed me IIT [Illinois Institute of Technology], where I later studied architecture.

Campbell A lot of things were attracting you to architecture. In the schools that I went to, nothing led you in the direction of architecture. Everything was taught in terms of abstract symbols — words and numbers and abstract ideas. And that's what people got credit for. If all you could do was tear down a Ford V8 engine and put it back together the next day, you were the dummy of the class. There was no respect for that. But those are the kinds of people who are the natural architects, these physical, spatial people.

Lee I believe Chicago to be the quintessential American city for architecture. And I think all of us growing up in Chicago gained an appreciation for architecture — and, perhaps more importantly, for urban design — even if it was subconsciously.

Campbell Did you feel that going into architecture was an unusual thing for an African-American? Or did that not occur to you?

Lee This sounds very naïve, but when I saw people doing things, it didn't register that they were white people doing things. They were just people doing things, and anybody who had the skill and the preparation should probably be able to do those things. One of my great passions is skiing, and one of the reasons I got interested in skiing was watching a movie called "Sun Valley Serenade," which was a wonderful combination of people: the Glenn Miller Band, the Nicholas Brothers — wonderful African-American tap dancers — Dorothy Dandridge, Milton Berle, John Payne, and Sonja Henie. I've seen it about seven times. It was set in Sun Valley, and I thought that skiing looked very cool. So I always had in the back of my mind that if I ever got the opportunity, I'd get into it. I've probably skied for over 20 years now. It didn't occur to me that these were white people skiing and that there were no black people.

Campbell A great way to be.

Lee But all of that became crystal clear before real long.

Campbell When you became president of the BSA, you brought a social agenda to that job that nobody quite had before or since.

Lee I think a lot of us were first attracted to architecture, in addition to the artistic side of it, because of a belief that better architecture could make better citizens, and better planning and better cities could also raise the standard of living for everyone. And growing up in Chicago I did see some really run-down areas that were transformed somewhat by good design. Certainly the Vietnam War, together with my early years at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, where the whole idea of advocacy planning and community legal services was starting to happen, showed me a way to combine architecture and urban design with a social purpose. And I worked for [urban designer] David Crane in Philadelphia, where I saw a way to bring architectural and urban design skills to bear in distressed settings that I cared about. So I think that's what really got me



Photo: Ben E. Watkins

Above, and facing page: New York Organic Fertilizer Company Bronx, New York

Stull and Lee with Tighe and Bond Consulting Engineers

Processing plant for converting sewage sludge into fertilizer pellets for land reclamation projects

going in that direction. I felt very fortunate that I could somehow practice my craft and at the same time ultimately do some good.

Campbell How do you feel about that now? Do you feel you've been successful in establishing that kind of career?

Lee Sometimes I think it's like two steps forward and three steps backwards. I see the negative impact of drugs and teenage pregnancy and violence and all that stuff in the neighborhoods. And I'm not sure that the gap hasn't grown even further between the haves and the have-nots, even within the African-American community itself. I don't mean to focus this exclusively on African-Americans — it's true of all the ethnic groups. I recently went back to the old neighborhood where I lived in Philadelphia, and I was saddened to see the deterioration. And when I go back to Chicago, it's devastating to go into the neighborhoods that I remember as thriving, beautiful neighborhoods. Both the buildings and many of the people are in a distressed situation.

Campbell What was it about those neighborhoods in your generation that was so different?



Photo: Dyer Kirsk

Yarmouth Street Vent Shaft
Boston

Stull and Lee

Ventilation shaft for Southwest Corridor transit tunnel

Lee I think segregation made the difference.

Campbell You mean school segregation?

Lee Residential segregation as well. Chicago was and perhaps is the most segregated city in the country. The South Side was almost exclusively African-American, and the North Side was almost exclusively white. When I took my wife there, to try and show her the Chicago that I grew up in, I gave up trying to show her what it was like on the South Side, because it was so torn asunder. I had to take her to the North Side and say, you know, South Side used to look like this. The fabric was intact. But in those days, all of the African-American community was pretty much compressed into a ghetto, so to speak. But the positive side of that was that you had schoolteachers and undertakers and business owners as well. And you didn't have the concentration of high-rise public housing at that time, either. Neighborhoods were torn down to build the public housing. In some cases, what they tore down was terrible. And initially, public housing was pretty good. It was fresh, it was new. It was better than what people were living in. But various social policies began to change things — like policies about whether you could have a working father in the house, which ended up pushing fathers out. But the interstate highway program was a factor, too, with its proliferation of the suburbs, which were by and large restricted. And so what happened was the city started to empty out as people moved out into the suburbs, and then the African-American community moved into the places that they left. And, in doing so, it lost a lot of its cohesiveness.

Campbell We're making a Louise Day Hicks argument. Neighborhood schools. Tightly-contained neighborhoods with everybody knowing each other.

Lee I would like to see a situation where you could have neighborhood schools, particularly if those schools were equal. And I don't mean separate-but-equal. I mean if the resources were evenly distributed among the various schools, the net effect might be a re-segregation of some of the schools. But if there's high-quality education, and if there are people who believe in the potential of the kids who are there, that may be better than busing them halfway across the city to some place where people are just satisfied that they aren't stealing hubcaps and

doing drugs, and have no real belief in what their full potential might be. I would like to find a way to make neighborhood schools work. I think one of the things that's missing in today's urban society is community accountability. When I grew up, if you were screwing around doing something you weren't supposed to do, somebody who might happen to know your father or your mother saw you at it. And there were two things that happened. One, they were empowered to reprimand you. And second, by the time you got home, your mom or your grandmother or your father or your grandfather or your uncle was waiting, and they already knew.

Campbell How do you see Boston? How long have you lived here now?

Lee Thirty-one years. Longer than I've lived anywhere. I've lived near Brookline Village since 1972. And I moved there, by the way, because it reminded me of Chicago in 1953. I wanted my kids to live in a place where they could go to a school that was diverse, where they could go off on their bicycles and I wouldn't worry as long as they showed up at dinner time, and where they could hop a fence and cut through somebody's back yard to get to some place, all on their own. And Brookline presented that set of options for me. There are many things about Boston that I like very much. I like the scale of it. Boston's a town in which you could probably get most of your phone calls returned. It's a town in which you can make some contribution and actually see some impact from your work. I think what's so frustrating for me about Boston is the same frustration I had with Bill Clinton. So much promise, and so much lost to distractions. When I look at a city like Boston with its educational facilities and its cultural facilities and its scale and its history, I think what a wonderful place it could be for a lot of people.

Campbell Why are people moving back into the city? That's happening in Chicago, too.

Lee My take on it is a couple of things. One, the suburbs, frankly, have gotten fairly boring. People would rather do more productive things with their time than be stuck on Route 9 or some comparable place. I think the baby-boomers, now that their kids are gone, are sitting out in Weston with a big house and noticing that the library benefit, or the ballpark, or the neat new restaurant — all that stuff — is in town.



Photo: Bruce Martin

Egleston Center
Roxbury, Massachusetts

Stull and Lee

Mixed-use retail center, for the Urban Edge Community Development Corporation

Campbell The myth changes, too, I think. When I first started watching television, you'd turn on the television and you'd see the Wild West. All the big shows were westerns. And then a few years later they were all about the suburbs — kids running across green lawns, dad in the den, and mom in the kitchen. That lasted for about a decade. For maybe 25 years now, all the TV shows have been set in the city. From "Cheers" to the hospital shows to the cop shows to "Seinfeld." So the myth has moved. I think there's a whole generation of people who have grown up in these really culturally deprived suburbs. And there's the traffic problem. When they're new, their greatest virtue is ease of access. When they're built out, their greatest problem is difficulty of access. I think people are coming back to city life because city life is pretty great. It's that simple.

Lee I think you're absolutely right. And in fact, I often cite television as a sort of barometer. Because in the early days of television, everybody lived in the city. Molly Goldberg lived in the city, Ralph Kramden lived in the city. And then they all started moving out. Fred MacMurray and My Three Sons all moved out to the suburbs. The first to move back was Mary Tyler Moore. She and Rhoda were in a little city neighborhood in Minneapolis. Now, everybody's in town. You have Bill Cosby living in Brooklyn. And so people are pouring back into the city.

Campbell What about the downside of that? People are being driven out of Boston by rising costs. Is that something architects should be worried about?

Lee Yes, I think we should. I think what we need is economic diversity. I don't think it's so much about gentrification *per se*, as much as it is about economic diversification.

Campbell How can you preserve economic diversity in a capitalist democracy? Why can't the rich just drive out the poor?

Lee I think they can if left unchecked, and I think that's where government plays a role. That's where the use of public land, public buildings, the public process, can establish an agenda that's broader than simply the profit motive.

Campbell What do you say of the argument that one hears sometimes, that we live in a time in which social purpose has been pretty much drained out of architecture, that it's come to be thought of as an aesthetic enterprise?

Lee I worry about that. And I worry about that even at the school level. When I go each year to teach my course at Harvard and I listen to the studio presentations, it's real difficult sometimes to follow how the language relates to architecture. And unfortunately I don't think there are enough kids who are interested in the real business of city building and architecture. They're only interested in architecture as art. I think it's important to recognize the value of "ensemble" buildings. One of the things I think is special about Boston is that it's not so much about individual buildings that scream, "Look at me!" as much as it is about ensembles. The Dorchester triple-deckers or the South End row-houses. It's about bigger pieces of fabric. And I think within all of that, there are areas that I call free-fire zones, where a lot of new stuff can happen. I wouldn't suggest that you come in the middle of the Back Bay and do some really off-the-wall thing, though I think you can stretch the envelope a little bit. But I think when you're starting to talk about



Beryl Gardens
Boston

Stull and Lee

Affordable housing for the Madison Park Community Development Corporation

the new waterfront and you're talking about South Bay or a lot of other places in the city, these are places where you could really be free and try some different things. And I think it's time that we do. We're a pretty staid community.

Campbell Do you think, as I do, that Boston is too retro in its architectural taste now?

Lee A little bit. But I don't think it's always the architect's fault.

Campbell I don't, either. Much more often it's the community's fault, and they're still responding to the devastation of the urban renewal. We haven't had a very strong BRA [Boston Redevelopment Authority] for a long time.

Lee I like the idea of a strong but compassionate BRA, with a strong person in the position of director. They need to work in concert with the mayor, but I think the mayor also has to render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's. When the mayor is getting good advice, he should respect that advice and go with it.

Campbell We used to say 20 years ago that cities are ungovernable. And then someone comes along like Daley in Chicago or Giuliani in New York. You may like them, you may not like them, but there's no question they govern. Are we ever going to have a strong mayor here? If not, why not?

Lee Some would say we have a strong mayor here right now.

Campbell I think we do, but maybe not on these issues.

Lee People respect the fact that we have a strong mayor, but I think what it means is that you can bypass everything else and go straight to the mayor. And I'm not sure that's the way it should work. I think the mayor has to be willing to empower the people who work for him. But I don't think the mayor should usurp publicly the efforts of the people who he has assigned to do certain tasks, so if you can't get what you want from the head of the BRA or the head of the Department of Neighborhood Development, you know you can go around them. It negates their power. And the mayor can't know everything. I think the buck needs to stop somewhere. But it's not the kind of a thing that one guy can or should be trying to run, where every deal's a negotiation.

Campbell That's very appealing to a mayor. If every deal is a negotiation, that simply increases the mayor's power.

Lee Absolutely. And I guess that's why you run for mayor, because you want a certain amount of power. But I think the smartest people are those who realize what they don't know and are willing to seek help in those areas. I like Tom Menino and I think he's grown tremendously in his role as mayor of the city. And I constantly push him on issues, particularly around greater diversity in projects happening downtown. There are very few minorities involved in any significant way in any of that building that's going on downtown. It comes back to the turf mentality that the city has. We've got to change that. ■■■



Photo: Warren Patterson



Photo: Warren Patterson

Roxbury Post Office
Roxbury, Massachusetts

Stull and Lee

New post office and distribution center

The Jury is In:

A sampling of comments from the 2000 awards juries

The full text of jury comments, including responses to individual projects and presentation advice, may be found at www.architects.org/awards.html

Honor Awards for Design Excellence *(page 36)*

...The challenge of designing contemporary buildings that are innovative and forward-looking while respecting the past is a significant one. In older cities such as Boston, San Francisco, or Chicago, we are all challenged to bridge the gap between the future and the past. As one juror noted, "We sold Post-Modernism to clients 20 years ago and we still have trouble getting beyond it." While many of the submissions we reviewed displayed extraordinary technical skill at replicating historical details in new buildings, it was our opinion that this design approach did not reflect our contemporary culture, did not add to the community discourse on the design of cities and communities, and did not further the profession's design leadership. For these three reasons, we chose to reward those submissions which took risks, were innovative, and advanced the discussion of design....

With all this, we believe the body of work we reviewed in this program is among the best we have seen in a long time....

Healthcare Facilities Design Awards *(page 50)*

...Most troubling about too many of this year's entries was the surprising lack of information on design processes — How did you get to this solution? What was the design concept? What was the idea that sparked the solution? What was the inspiration? These kinds of oversights in a few of the entries we reviewed seemed to parallel a similarly careless design focus on architecture that failed to address the experience of the patient, the user — many photographs illustrated glistening exterior facades or delightful lobbies but too few images focused on patient-care spaces in the facilities we examined. We as design professionals still seem to find it anathema to put people in our photographs.

With these reservations about some of the entries we received, we also found projects that delighted us, surprised us, impressed us with the designers' knowing awareness of the purpose of the facilities being designed....Good designers, such as those we recognize here, meet and exceed complex program challenges as well as the challenges of budget restraints....

Housing Design Awards *(page 54)*

...We were struck by the high level of competence exhibited in a large majority of the work we reviewed... In general, we wished architects paid as much attention to interiors and to landscaping as we do to the exterior of our buildings. Among the projects we chose not to honor this year, we also noted a recurring difficulty in assembling forms; it made us think that we may be failing to draw sufficiently on our training in tectonics.

The far larger and more significant issues that engaged us in our full day of discussion during this jurying process was the lamentable national absence of significant investments in housing. That it is still extremely difficult and often impossible to build affordable housing in our cities is a sad commentary on our culture....

Interior Design Awards *(page 66)*

The body of work we reviewed included many projects defined by challenging design issues with brave if often unresolved design solutions: start-up dot-com facilities, for example, in which efforts to provide innovative design statements with minimal time and budgets did not seem to result in enduring or exemplary places to work; child-care or child-oriented spaces with precedents reminiscent of commercial child-entertainment facilities that resulted in spaces that seemed little more than condensed shopping/play malls; and retail stores, fast-food outlets and similar facilities that for the most part were jarring perhaps because of attempts to provide endless amusement and distractions without innovative brand-building design.

With those comments and concerns, however, also came an appreciation of the professionalism of architects and interior designers working in this arena. There was a very large number of entries this year that reflected exceptional skill and imaginative solutions to difficult problems.

Unbuilt Architecture Awards *(page 76)*

...After examining these projects, the jury can safely say that there appears to be no "ism" or overt trend which has gripped the profession — and this is fine. The world is multivalent and full of amazing opportunities for a variety of design expressions and an unbuilt awards program such as this should encourage this divergent response....

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2001

	Call for entries available	Submission deadline
Healthcare Facilities Design Healthcare facilitites of any type anywhere in the world by any New England architect. Also, any architect anywhere in the world may submit any project built in New England.	January 2001	March 12, 2001
Urban Design co-sponsored by AIA New York Urban design projects anywhere in the world by New England or New York architects, landscape architects, or professional planners. Also, any architect, landscape architect, or professional planner anywhere in the world may submit New England or New York projects.	January 2001	April 9, 2001
Sustainable Design co-sponsored by AIA New York Any project of any type anywhere in the world by any design professional anywhere in the world.	January 2001	April 30, 2001
Unbuilt Architecture Any architect, educator, or architecture student anywhere in the world may submit "real," academic, and/or theoretical projects.	March 2001	July 16, 2001
Honor Awards co-sponsored by Poole Professional Ltd. and DPIC Any project of any type anywhere in the world by any Massachusetts architect. Also, any architect anywhere in the world may submit any project built in Massachusetts.	April 2001	August 21, 2001

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Calls for entries are available on the Boston Society of Architects Web site (www.architects.org) or by e-mail at bsa@architects.org or phone: 617-951-1433 x221.

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Kallmann McKinnell & Wood

1993 ***MIT Rotch Library***
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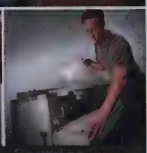
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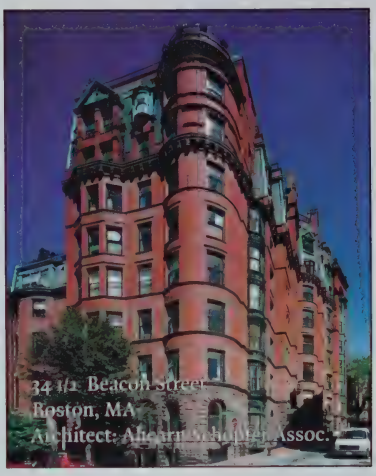
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The Longyear Museum



Photography: Warren Patterson

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The Longyear Foundation chose Richard White Sons to serve as CM for the Longyear Museum, which focuses on the work and personal effects of Mary Baker Eddy. The museum contains curatorial and administrative offices, galleries, archives, and an auditorium and theatre.

FOR INFORMATION contact
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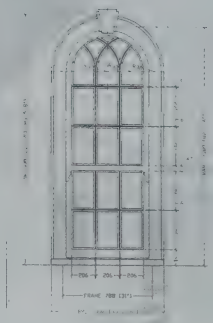
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The 2000 Harleston Parker Medal

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Rafael Moneo and
Payette Associates



Jury:

Susan Personette AIA
MIT Capital Projects, Cambridge, Massachusetts
Chair, Harleston Parker Medal Committee

Kimberly Alexander
Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts

Bob Daigle
Daigle Engineering, Methuen, Massachusetts

Deborah Fennick
TAMS, Boston

Brian Healy AIA
Brian Healy Architects, Boston

Lee Kennedy
Lee Kennedy Company, Dorchester, Massachusetts

Peter Kuttner FAIA
Cambridge Seven Associates
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Theodore Szostkowski AIA
Kallmann McKinnell & Wood, Boston

Marc Truant AIA
Marc Truant & Associates
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Nick Wheeler
Wheeler Photographics, Weston, Massachusetts

Editor's note: The full text of jury comments may be found at www.architects.org/awards.html

For information about the design of the Davis Center: www.wellesley.edu/DavisMuseum/DMCCMoneo/DMCC_building_homepage.html

The Harleston Parker Medal was established in 1921 by J. Harleston Parker to recognize "the most beautiful piece of architecture, building, monument, or structure within the limits of the City of Boston or of the Metropolitan Parks District." Its only criterion is "beauty," an attribute its creator neglected to define — much to the delight and puzzlement of juries ever since. This year's jury was no exception:

"Our discussion of beauty centered on the transcendent, subconscious, emotional, and timeless qualities of the buildings we each found beautiful. Soul-restoring, profoundly moving, culturally meaningful in our society, enduring, transcultural — these were some of the terms mentioned in our discussion. We agreed that social responsibility was a desirable but not necessary condition of beauty, in contrast to the juries and the awards of the past several years.

"The Davis Art Museum emerged as the clear choice. The jury appreciated witnessing the 'hand of a master' at work in this building's high level of resolution and rigor, as well as its carefully studied and executed simplicity... The interdependent, integrated interior spaces of the museum were compelling, deeply satisfying and uplifting all at once, fitting our collective sense of what is beautiful. We agreed that the building had the timeless quality that we sought... The jury was unanimous in agreeing that the Davis Art Museum met our criteria for beauty and clearly deserves the Harleston Parker Medal."

The 2000 Harleston Parker Medal:
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Wellesley College
Wellesley, Massachusetts

Design Architect:
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Madrid, Spain

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below – Steve Rosenthal
facing page top and center – Scott Frances/Esto
facing page bottom – Steve Briggs

The Davis Museum and Cultural Center at Wellesley College, completed in 1993, was the first American building by Rafael Moneo, the Pritzker Prize-winning Spanish architect. Its site is adjacent to the Jewett Art Center, Paul Rudolph's 1958 masterpiece — a seemingly sure-fire set-up for the kind of controversy that has followed other efforts to add onto Modern masterpieces. Instead, this addition to the Wellesley family is exceptionally well-behaved and respectful, with a healthy measure of self-esteem. Referential without being overly reverential, Moneo has actually improved the Jewett by at last making its famous stairway to nowhere a stairway to somewhere.

Despite its role as a regional resource, the Davis is primarily a teaching facility. Teaching museums tend to be more intimate than their big-city counterparts, their smaller scale and greater accessibility placing the students eye-to-eye with artists of the past. Here, intimacy is created by glimpses of life behind



the scenes, a bit like going on a house tour and finding that someone has left a sweater on the back of a chair. Students visiting the museum see the freight elevator, observe curators at work, walk past administrative offices, and learn that art is more than entertainment.

The Davis' intimacy is also a function of its architecture — not in the bold massing observed from the exterior, but in the development of its interior spaces. The gallery block is conceptually simple: a cube of equal-height galleries stacked four-high, pierced by a central stair. It is daylight that makes this simple idea come to life: daylight that pours into the upper gallery through five north-facing lightscoops, that streams down the exterior walls to the level below, that spills through an atrium next to the stair, drenching three levels. The stair itself is perhaps the most intimate space in the building. Wide enough for only two people, it is enclosed by maple-veneered walls that produce a soft gold glow under its low lighting. At each landing, the visitor is given a view through the atrium back into the galleries, a sensation like standing in the shelter of a cavern while peering through a cascade to the landscape beyond.

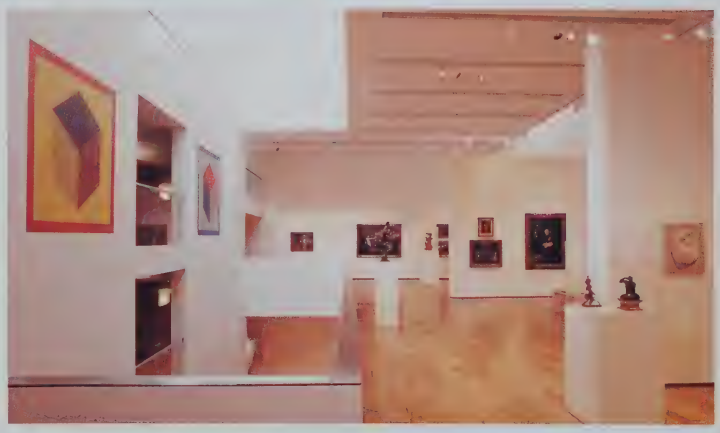
Climbing the stair is an experience to be savored, a point made at the upper levels where the steps themselves change to very low risers and deep treads. It is a sudden, and rare, intrusion by the architect, as though he is plucking at your sleeve, urging, "Slow down! Take your time! You're going to love what's next, it's really good!" And it *is* good. Arriving at the top, the tight dimness of the stairway explodes into a bright airy gallery, an attic full of treasures where the roof has been removed to let the light in.

One of the most appealing aspects of the Davis is also the greatest factor in its success: the lack of ego in its architect. Moneo is certainly confident, but he is also modest. After visiting the arts complex, you begin to understand his sense of propriety, that hollering for attention is an unseemly activity. Instead, he has made a building that takes its place quietly, asserting its presence while honoring those around it. A good lesson from a teaching museum.

Elizabeth S. Padjen FAIA







Honor Awards for Design Excellenc

37 ADD Inc
Cambridge Incubator, Cambridge, Massachusetts

38 Carlson Associates
State Street Data Center, Kansas City, Missouri

39 Ellenzweig Associates
Dickinson College, Physics/Astronomy, Math/
Computer Science Building, Carlisle, Pennsylvania

40 Brian Healy Architects
Lincoln Street Garage, Boston

41 Leers Weinzapfel Associates Architects
University of Pennsylvania Chiller Plant

42 Jonathan Levi Architects
The Belmont Hill Club, Belmont, Massachusetts

43 Machado and Silvetti Associates
Scully Hall, Princeton University
Princeton, New Jersey

44 Machado and Silvetti Associates
with Prescott Muir Architects
The Marcia and John Price Museum Building
Salt Lake City, Utah

45 Payette Associates
Veterans Affairs Medical Center Ambulatory Care
Addition and Renovation, Providence, Rhode Island

46 Perry Dean Rogers & Partners
Fine Arts Center Lobby, University of Massachusetts
Amherst, Massachusetts

47 Thompson and Rose Architects
Acton Bathhouse and Amphitheater
Acton, Massachusetts

48 Thompson and Rose Architects
Gulf Coast Museum of Art, Largo, Florida

Special Citations

49 CBT/ Childs Bertman Tseckares
Memorial Hall Tower Spire Restoration
Cambridge, Massachusetts

49 Jonathan Levi Architects
John D. Runkle School, Brookline, Massachusetts

Jury:

Myriam Camargo AIA
CopelandCamargo Architects, Dallas

Gordon Chong FAIA
Gordon H. Chong & Partners, San Francisco
Vice-President/President-elect,
American Institute of Architects,
Washington, DC

Ralph Johnson FAIA
Perkins & Will, Chicago

Editor's Note:
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Honor Award:
Cambridge Incubator
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Architect:
ADD Inc
Cambridge, Massachusetts
www.addinc.com

Project team:
Wayne S. Koch AIA (project executive); Werner Hofmann (project manager); Vincenzo Giambertone AIA (project designer); Michael Dobler

Contractor:
Kirkland Construction Company, Inc.

Consultants:
BR+A Consulting Engineers (MEP); The Cavan Group (data distribution); Baker Design Group (furniture)

Project description:
The design goal for Cambridge Incubator's 18,000 square-foot interiors, housing its operations and up to 20 start-ups, embodies flexibility, ingenuity, and economy expressed in a four-part design solution. Client incubators, shared spaces, conference rooms, and executive offices all work in concert to satisfy these primary requirements.

Photography: Lucy Chen

Honor Award:
State Street Data Center
Kansas City, Missouri

Client:
State Street Bank

Architect:
Carlson Associates, Inc.
Framingham, Massachusetts
www.carlsonsolutions.com

Project team:
Tony Asfour (principal in charge); Robert Stein AIA (principal architect); Anthony Caracino (project architect)

Contractor:
J.E. Dunn Construction Co.

Construction Manager:
George B.H. Macomber Company

Project description:
An example of a new generation of buildings housing technologically advanced equipment, this data center processes over $2 billion in daily mutual fund transactions. As such, it is considered a "critical" facility, operating continuously and designed for 99.9999 percent reliability and concurrent maintenance.

Photography: Michael Moran









Honor Award:
Dickinson College Physics/Astronomy, Math/Computer Science Building
Carlisle, Pennsylvania

Architect:
Ellenzweig Associates, Inc.
Cambridge, Massachusetts
www.ellenzweig.com

Photography: Anton Grassl

Project team
Michael Lauber AIA (principal in charge); Miltos Catemoris AIA (principal in charge of design); Paul Norris (project architect); Jonathan Cutler (project manager)

Contractor
Alexander Constructors, Inc.

Consultants:
LeMessurier Consultants (structural); BR+A Consulting Engineers (mechanical, electrical); Architerra, PC (landscape architecture)

Project description:
The L-shaped building houses departmental spaces in each wing, and shared facilities at the intersection. The building embraces a garden and teaching space; on the street side, the planetarium/observatory is separated from the main building for vibration concerns; it becomes the symbol for the scientific mission of the building.



Honor Award:
Lincoln Street Garage
Boston

Client:
Intercontinental Development; Allright Parking

Architect:
Brian Healy Architects
Boston
www.brianhealyarchitects.com

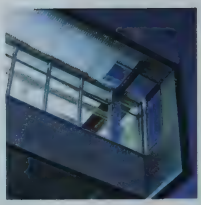
Project team:
Brian Healy AIA, Betsy Walker, Karin Tehve, Craig Scott, Maiya Dos, Beth Whittaker

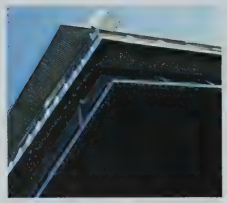
Contractor:
Sunrise Erectors

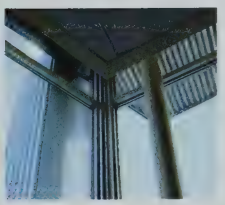
Consultant:
Sarkis Zerounian (structural)

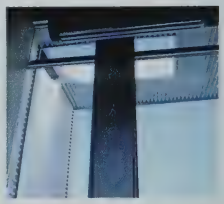
Project description:
The renovated Lincoln Street Garage puts the layers of its evolution on display. The hybrid structure, topped by an Internet company, points forward to a new information culture, while its lower-level garage and supermarket — active and open to the life of the street — embrace the economics of the passing industrial culture.

Photography: Dan Bibb, Bruce Martin











Honor Award:
University of Pennsylvania Chiller Plant
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Architect:
Leers Weinzapfel Associates Architects
Boston
www.lwa-architects.com

Project team:
Jane Weinzapfel FAIA (principal in charge); Andrea Leers FAIA (consulting principal); Joe Raia (project manager); Cathy Lassen (project architect)

Client representative:
Trammell Crow, Co.

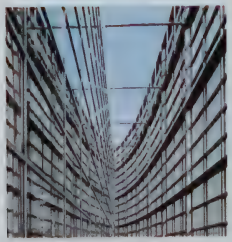
Construction manager:
Sordoni Skanska

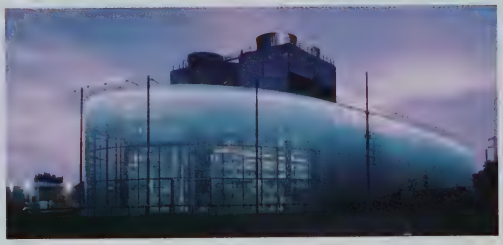
Consultants:
Keast and Hood Co. (MEP); William J. Trefz Consulting Engineers; Boles, Smyth Associates, Inc. (civil); Michael Van Valkenburg Associates (landscape architecture); Richard Mabry (geotechnical); Solutions Engineering (codes); Lam Partners (lighting)

Project description:
The University of Pennsylvania required a new chilled water plant to serve the campus at a highly visible location along the Schuylkill River. The competition-winning design for the new structure creates an attractive gateway presence, while retaining maximum use of the site for a new varsity baseball field.

Photography: Peter Aaron/Esto







Honor Award
The Belmont Hill Club
Belmont, Massachusetts

Architect:
Jonathan Levi Architects
(formerly
Stein/Levi Architects)
Boston
www.leviarc.com

Project team:
Jonathan Levi AIA (principal in charge); Grace La; Kevin Reeves

Contractor:
Essex Builders Corp.

Consultants:
Charles Chaloff Engineering (structural); R.D. Kimball Engineering (mechanical)

Project description:
This is the expansion of an existing 1963 clubhouse for a tennis/swim club. The new structure and materials palette build on the existing pre-fabricated steel building. The radial plan is based on the location of an existing tree planted at the time of the club's opening by its founder.

Photography: Anton Grassl







Honor Award:
Scully Hall
Princeton University
Princeton, New Jersey

Architect:
Machado and Silvetti Associates, Inc.
Boston
www.machado-silvetti.com

Project team:
Rodolfo Machado, Assoc. AIA (principal in charge); Jorge Silvetti, Assoc. AIA (consulting principal); Peter Lofgren AIA (project architect); Douglas Dolezal (project manager); Gretchen Neeley (project design associate); Elizabeth Gibb (project design associate)

Construction managers:
Irwin & Leighton, Inc.

Consultants:
Lim Consultants, Inc. (structural);TMP Consulting Engineers, Inc. (mechanical, electrical); Van Note and Harvey Associates, P. C. (civil); Richard Burck Associates, Inc. (landscape architecture); LAM Partners, Inc. (lighting); Richard D. White (specifications); Rolf Jensen Associates (codes)

Project description:
The first-phase implementation of the Princeton Field Master Plan is this keystone building located on the edge of the existing athletic fields. Scully Hall functions as the main gate to the athletic fields. This 267-bed dormitory houses upper-level students and contains lounges, instructional rooms, study chambers, as well as kitchenette facilities.

Photography: Eduard Hueber / Arch Photo







Honor Award:
The Marcia and John Price Museum Building
Salt Lake City, Utah

Client:
University of Utah, State of Utah, and Marcia and John Price

Design Architect:
Machado and Silvetti Associates, Inc.
Boston
www.machado-silvetti.com

Associate Architect:
Prescott Muir Architect
Salt Lake City, Utah

Project team:
Jorge Silvetti, Assoc. AIA (principal in charge); Rodolfo Machado, Assoc. AIA (consulting principal); Peter Lofgren AIA (project director); Theodore Touloukian (project manager); Max Moore (project coordinator); Stephen Chung (senior designer); Michael Yusem (senior designer)

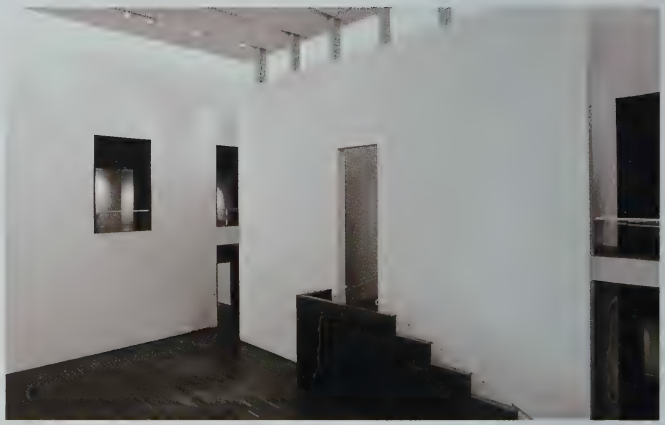
Construction managers:
Layton Construction Company, Inc.

Consultants:
ARW Engineering (structural); Van Boerum & Frank Associates, Inc. (mechanical); BNA Consulting Engineers, Inc. (electrical); Sear-Brown Group (civil); M. Goodwin, Inc. (museum); Garr Campbell Associates (landscape architecture); LAM Partners, Inc. (lighting); Acentech, Inc. (acoustical)

Project description:
The Marcia and John Price Museum Building for the Utah Museum of Fine Arts comprises a continuous succession of stepping prismatic volumes that wrap around as they ascend. These culminate in the Grand Gallery, the building's centerpiece and an icon against the spectacular backdrop of the Wasatch Mountains.

Photography: Scot Zimmerman













Honor Award:
Veterans Affairs Medical Center Ambulatory Care Addition and Renovation
Providence, Rhode Island

Architect:
Payette Associates, Inc.
Boston
www.payette.com

Project team:
Kevin Sullivan AIA (principal in charge); Chris Dumont (job captain); Ed Fowler AIA (detailer extraordinaire); Brian Carlic (project landscape architect)

Contractor:
H.V. Collins Company

Consultants:
Shooshanian Engineering Associates (MEP); Lim Consultants, Inc. (structural); Gordon R. Archibald, Inc. (civil); CostPro, Inc. (costs)

Project description:
The VA Providence is seeking to improve its outpatient services with a new ambulatory care addition and renovation. The focus of the medical center complex, a copper-clad entrance pavilion, provides a new entry sequence and also engages a clinical model that serves as a national primary-care prototype.

Photography: Warren Jagger

Honor Award:
Fine Arts Center Lobby
University
of Massachusetts
Amherst, Massachusetts

Architect:
Perry Dean Rogers &
Partners: Architects
Boston
www.perrydean.com

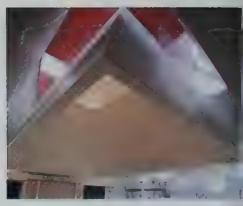
Project team:
Peter A. Ringenbach AIA (principal); Warren Van Wees; Thomas McCarty; Scott Slarsky

Contractor:
Handford General Contractors

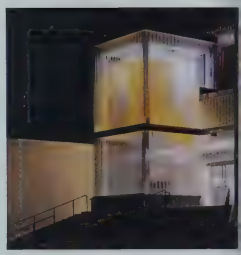
Consultants:
LeMessurier Consultants (structural); Architectural Engineers Inc. (MEP); The Lighting Design Group (lighting); Acentech Inc. (acoustical); Daedalus Projects, Inc. (cost); Rolf Jensen Associates (code)

Project description:
The concept was to create a lobby that would also be the marquee for the fine-arts complex. With color and transparency as the guiding principles, this goal was accomplished by creating transparent/translucent volumes with yellow and red lanterns, which are lit by sunshine during the day and artificially at night.

Photography: Peter Mauss/Esto













Honor Award:
Acton Bathhouse and Amphitheater
Acton, Massachusetts

Architect:
Thompson and Rose Architects, Inc.
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Contractor:
E.A. Colangeli Construction

Consultants:
Ly Consulting Engineers, Inc.;
Erdman Anthony Consulting Engineers

Project description:
The program calls for a bathhouse and amphitheater to serve town residents. The bathhouse is located at the south end of the site and serves as a gateway to the landscape, the beach, and the amphitheater. The amphitheater is composed of a massive semi-circular earth berm, which offers an elevated promenade on the site.

Photography: Chuck Choi

Honor Award
Gulf Coast Museum of Art
Largo, Florida

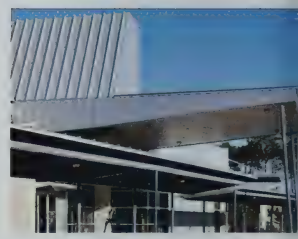
Architect:
Thompson and Rose Architects, Inc.
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Contractor:
Peter Brown Construction

Consultants:
Bobes Associates Consulting Engineers, Inc.

Project description:
The museum provides flexible new facilities for a growing collection of modern art as well as a public arts and crafts program. The design for the 50,000 square-foot art center creates a community of public learning set within a new 60-acre botanical garden.

Photography: Chuck Choi





Special Citation for Historical Interpretation:
Memorial Hall Tower Spire Restoration
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Client:
Harvard University

Architect:
CBT/ Childs Bertman Tseckares Inc.
Boston
www.cbtarchitects.com

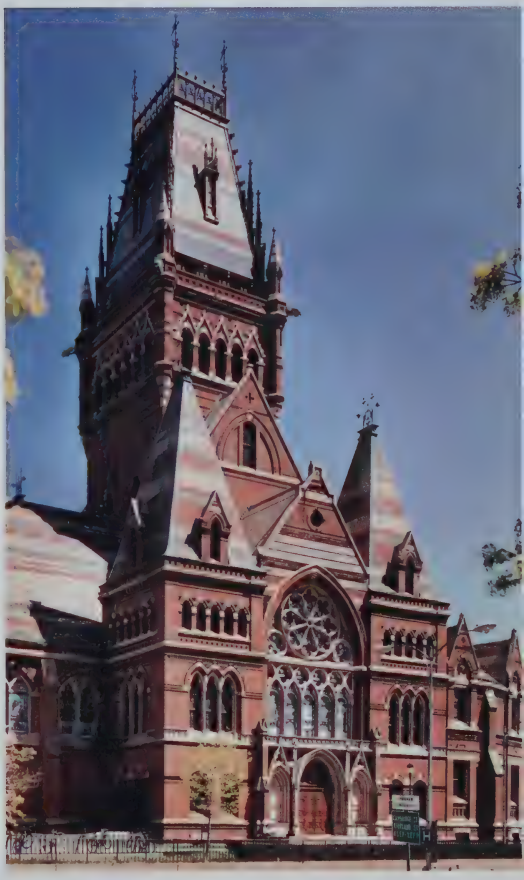
Contractor:
Shawmut Design and Construction

Consultants:
LeMessurier Consultants (structural); Preservation Technology Associates, Inc. (preservation); Ripman Lighting Consultant (lighting)

Project description:
Forty-four years ago, the crown jewel of Harvard Yard — the tower spire of Memorial Hall — was lost in a fire. Today, after extensive research, the newly restored tower spire is once again the proud and beautiful signature of one of the most important historic structures on the Harvard campus.

Photography: Steve Rosenthal





Special Citation for Renovation:
John D. Runkle School
Brookline, Massachusetts

Architect:
Jonathan Levi Architects
Boston
www.leviarc.com

Project team:
Jonathan Levi AIA (principal in charge); Matthew LaRue; Scott Brodsky

Contractor:
A&A Window Products

Consultant:
Charles Chaloff Engineering (structural)

Project description:
A new window and cladding system was introduced to the existing classroom-window bay organization of this 1960s-era school. A variable pattern of windows, keying off the existing random locations of air vent louvers, gives a unique identity to each classroom and creates intrigue for the students.

Photography: Nick Wheeler

Healthcare Facilities Design Awards

Jury:

Linda Gabel IIDA
Karlsberger Companies, Columbus, Ohio

Charles Gianfagna
Lenox Hill Hospital, New York City

Joanne MacIsaac IIDA, IFMA
TRO/The Ritchie Organization
Newton, Massachusetts

Jerry Switzer AIA
Morris/Switzer & Associates, Williston, Vermont

John Zychowicz, Jr. AIA
DiGiorgio Associates, Boston

51 Odell Associates
Shriners Hospitals for Children Burns Institute, Boston

51 Rothman Partners
Cosmetic Plastics Center and Same-Day Admissions
Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary, Boston

52 Rothman Partners
Cox Cancer Center/ Partners CancerCare
Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston

52 Tsoi/Kobus & Associates
Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts
Headquarters and Clinic, Boston

53 Warner + Associates
East Cambridge Neighborhood Health Center
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Editor's Note:
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Healthcare Facilities Design Award:
Shriners Hospitals for Children
Burns Institute
Boston

Architect:
Odell Associates
Charlotte, North Carolina
www.odell.com

Project team:
Benjamin T. Rook FAIA (principal in charge); John W. Walters AIA (project designer); David R. Murray AIA (project architect)

Construction manager:
Barton-Malow/Beacon

Consultants:
LeMessurier Consultants (structural); Earth Tech (environmental)

Photography
exterior view: Peter Vanderwarker
interior views: Tim Buchman







Healthcare Facilities Design Award:
Cox Cancer Center/ Partners CancerCare Massachusetts General Hospital
Boston

Architect:
Rothman Partners Incorporated
Boston
www.rothmanpartners.com

Contractor:
Beacon Skanska Construction Company

Consultants:
Cosentini Associates LLP (MEP); LeMessurier Consultants (structural)

Photography: Steve Rosenthal







Healthcare Facilities Design Award:
Cosmetic Plastics Center and Same-Day Admissions
Boston

Client:
Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary

Architects:
Rothman Partners, Incorporated
Boston
www.rothmanpartners.com

Contractor:
Walsh Brothers, Inc

Consultants
Robert W. Sullivan, Inc. (MEP); Syska & Hennessy, Inc. (electrical); LeMessurier Consultants (structural)

Photography Steve Rosentha

Healthcare Facilities Design Award:
East Cambridge Neighborhood Health Center
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Client:
Cambridge Health Alliance

Architect:
Warner + Associates, Inc.
Boston

Project team:
Donald A. Warner AIA (principal in charge); David Farmer AIA (project architect); Leah Harrison (interior designer); Donald McNamara, PE (site representative)

Contractor:
Payton Construction Corporation

Consultants:
Thompson Consultants, Inc. (MEP/fire protection); Ly Consulting Engineers, Inc. (structural)

Photography: Greg Premu







Healthcare Facilities Design Award:
Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts Headquarters and Clinic
Boston

Architect:
Tsoi/Kobus & Associates, Inc.
Cambridge, Massachusetts
www.tka-architects.com

Consultants:
David M. Berg Associates, Inc (structural); Abbood/Holloran Associates, Inc. (MEP); Shen Milson & Wilke (acoustical)

Photography: Steve Rosenthal

BSA/AIA New York Housing Design Awards Program

Jury:

John Adelberg AIA
Architectural Partners Inc., Watertown, Massachusetts

Judith Edelman FAIA
The Edelman Partnership/Architects, New York City

Tony Green
The Green Company, Newton, Massachusetts

Herbert Oppenheimer FAIA
Oppenheimer & Vogelstein, New York City

Alfred Wojciechowski AIA
CBT/Childs Bertman Tseckares, Boston;
Chair, BSA Housing Committee

Editor's Note:
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Houses

55 Dewing & Schmid Associates
Lind House, Carlisle, Massachusetts

56 Epstein/Joslin Architects
Private house, Cambridge, Massachusetts

56 Graham Gund Architects
Private Residence, Nantucket, Massachusetts

57 LDA Architects
20 Unity Court, North End, Boston

58 Jonathan Levi Architects
May Residence, Brookline, Massachusetts

58 Edward I. Mills & Associates
Melnick Residence, Brighton, Michigan

59 Schwartz/Silver Architects
Vacation House, Cape Cod, Massachusetts

Dormitories

60 Jeremiah Eck Architects
Middlebury College Student Social Houses
Middlebury, Vermont

61 Kallmann McKinnell & Wood
Chamberlain Hall Dormitory, Bowdoin College
Brunswick, Maine

61 William Rawn Associates, Architects
Residence Hall, Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine

Multi-Family Housing

62 Goody, Clancy & Associates
Auburn Court Housing, Cambridge, Massachusetts

62 HMFH Architects
Worthington Place Apartments
East Cambridge, Massachusetts

63 The Stephen B. Jacobs Group
225 Bleecker Street, New York City

63 James McCullar & Associates Architects
Sondra Thomas Apartments, New York City

Citations

64 ADD Inc

65 Bandera Architecture

65 Cambridge Seven Associates
with Design 103 Limited

64 John Ellis & Associates, Architects

64 Larsen Shein Ginsberg + Magnusson

65 Lindsay Architecture Associates

65 James McCullar & Associates

Housing Award:
Lind House
Carlisle, Massachusetts

Architect:
Dewing & Schmid Associates, Inc.
Cambridge, Massachusetts
www.dsarch.com

Project team:
Ann M. Walters and Allen Dewing, Jr., AIA

Contractor:
D. B. Schroeder & Co., Inc.

Consultants:
Foley & Buhl (structural); Stephen Stimson Associates (landscape architecture); Kochman, Reidt & Haigh (kitchen)

Photography: Nick Wheeler







Housing Award:
Private house
Cambridge,
Massachusetts

Architect:
Epstein/Joslin Architects
Cambridge,
Massachusetts

Contractor:
Matthew Fischer Master Builder

Consultants:
Weidlinger Associates Consulting Engineers (structural); Andra Birkerts Design (furnishings); Gunner Berg, Sandwich Cabinet Shop (cabinetry)

Photography: Steve Rosenthal





Housing Award:
Private Residence
Nantucket, Massachusetts

Architect:
Graham Gund Architects
Cambridge, Massachusetts
www.grahamgund.com

Associated firm:
Dian Boone Interior Design
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Contractor:
Kalman Construction Corp.

Photography: Peter Aaron/Esto







Housing Award:
20 Unity Court
North End
Boston

Client:
Dr. Ed Harlow

Architect:
LDA Architects
Cambridge, Massachusetts
www.lda-architects.com

Contractor:
GF Rhode Construction

Consultants:
LeMessurier Consultants
(structural)

Photography: Peter Vanderwarker





Housing Award:
May Residence
Brookline, Massachusetts

Architect:
Jonathan Levi Architects
(formerly
Stein/Levi Architects)
Boston
www.leviarc.com

Contractor:
Birchwood Builders

Consultant:
Gregorian Engineers (structural)

Photography: Anton Grassl

Housing Award:
Melnick Residence
Brighton, Michigan

Architect:
Edward I. Mills &
Associates
New York City

Contractor:
Bob and Betsy Melnick

Consultant:
Joel Weinstein, PE (structural)

Photography: Paul Warchol









Housing Award:
Vacation House
Cape Cod, Massachusetts

Architect:
Schwartz/Silver Architects Inc.
Boston

Contractor:
Hutlin/Richardson

Consultants:
Sarkis Zerounian & Associates (structural); Coastal Engineering (civil); Nancy Shapero (landscape); Peter Erickson (project manager)

Photography: Peter Vanderwarker







Housing Award:
Middlebury College Student Social Houses
Middlebury, Vermont

Architect:
Jeremiah Eck Architects, Inc.
Boston
www.jearch.com

Contractor:
Engelberth Construction, Inc.

Consultants:
Lawes Consulting Engineers (structural); Lunquist, Kileen, Potvin, & Bender, Inc. (mechanical); Phelps Engineering (civil); Offices of H. Keith Wagner (landscape architecture)

Photography: Jim Westphalen





Housing Award:
Residence Hall,
Bowdoin College
Brunswick, Maine

Architect:
William Rawn Associates,
Architects, Inc.
Boston

Project team:
William L. Rawn III, FAIA (principal); Clifford Gayley AIA (project architect)

Contractor:
Ouellet Associates, Inc.

Consultants:
LeMessurier Consultants (structural); TMP Consulting Engineers (mechanical); Lottero + Mason (electrical); Carol R. Johnson Associates (landscape architecture); SpecEdit (specifications); Squaw Bay Corporation (civil)

Photography: Steve Rosenthal





Housing Award:
Chamberlain Hall
Dormitory
Bowdoin College
Brunswick, Maine

Architect:
Kallmann McKinnell
& Wood
Boston
www.kmwarch.com

Project team:
Theodore Szostkowski AIA (design principal); Michael McKinnell FAIA (design principal); Hans Huber (technical principal); Mark deShong AIA (project manager)

Contractor:
Pizzagalli Construction Company

Consultants:
Carol R. Johnson Associates (landscape architecture); Lim Consultants, Inc. (structural); Cosentini Associates (MEP)

Photography: Robert Benson





Housing Award:
Worthington Place Apartments
East Cambridge, Massachusetts

Architect:
HMFH Architects
Cambridge, Massachusetts
www.hmfh.com

Project team:
George R. Metzger AIA (principal in charge); Ronald Lamarre (project manager); Martin Batt (project architect); Mario J. Torroella AIA (design director)

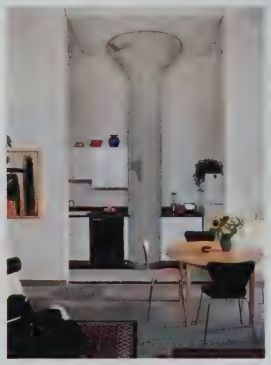
Contractor:
CWC Builders, Inc.

Consultants:
Foley and Buhl Engineering, Inc. (structural); Architectural Engineers, Inc. (mechanical, plumbing); Sam Zax Associates (electrical); Judith Nitsch Engineering (civil); Services in Historic Preservation (preservation)

Photography: Anton Grassl







Housing Award:
Auburn Court Housing
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Client:
Homeowner's Rehabilitation, Inc.

Architect:
Goody, Clancy & Associates
Boston
www.gcassoc.com

Contractor:
Jackson Construction Company

Consultants:
Judith Nitsch Engineering (civil); Lim Consultants (structural); C.A. Crowley Engineers (mechanical, electrical); T.J. DeWan Associates (landscape); Falk Associates (specifications)

Photography: Anton Grassl



Housing Award:
225 Bleecker Street
New York City

Client: A.P.A. Management

Architect:
The Stephen B. Jacobs Group, PC
New York City

Contractor:
T & R Construction

Consultants:
DeNardis Associates, Inc. (structural);
Ilya Veldshteyn, PE (mechanical)

Photography: Todd Henkels



Housing Award:
Sondra Thomas Apartments
New York City

Owner:
New York Housing Authority

Architect:
James McCullar & Associates Architects
New York City

Contractor:
KLM Construction Inc.

Consultants:
Rosenwasser Grossman, PC (structural); Abraham Joselow, PC (mechanical, electrical); George Salley, ASLA (landscape architecture); Betro Consulting

Photography: Wade Zimmerman

BSA / AIA New York Housing Design Citations

Citation for Community Revitalization:
Cronin's Landing
Waltham, Massachusetts

Client:
The Boulder Company

Architect:
ADD Inc
Cambridge, Massachusetts
www.addinc.com

Contractor:
Suffolk Construction Company, Inc.

Photography: Peter Vanderwarker









Citation for Community Process:
La Casa de Esperanza
New York City

Client:
The Lower East Side Mutual Housing Association

Architect:
John Ellis & Associates, Architects
New York City

Contractor:
Mayco Construction, Inc.

Consultants:
Robert Silman Associates, PC (structural); George Langer Associates, Consulting Engineers (mechanical, electrical); Bong Y. Yu (private finance)

Photography: Steve Elmore

Citation for Affordable Housing:
Melrose Commons — Plaza de Los Angeles
Bronx, New York

Client:
Elton Associates

Architect:
Larsen Shein Ginsberg + Magnusson, LLP, Architects
New York City

Construction manager:
Procida Realty & Construction Corporation

Consultants:
Albert P. Kung Consulting Engineers (structural); Athwal Associates (mechanical, electrical); Bohler Engineering (civil)

Photography: Elliott Kaufman

Citation for Innovative Affordable Housing:
Parcel R-11C:
2, 4, 6, 8, and 10
East Concord Street
Boston

Client/Contractor: Old Boston Restorations, Inc.

Architect:
Bandera Architecture

Consultants:
Arthur Choo & Associates (structural); Huntington Homes, Inc. (modular builder)

Photography: Richard S. Bandera



Citation for High-Rise Housing:
TBI River Villa
Bangkok, Thailand

Design Architect:
Cambridge Seven Associates, Inc.
Cambridge, Massachusetts
www.c7a.com

Architect of Record:
Design 103 Limited
Bangkok, Thailand

Consultants:
LeMessurier Consultants (structural); Cosentini Associates (MEP); Fisher Marantz (lighting); Hanscomb Associates (costs)





Citation for Integrated Landscape Design:
Shore Road
Private Residence
Bristol, Rhode Island

Architect:
Lindsay Architecture Associates, Inc.
Boston

Contractor:
R. W. Chew Construction (phases I & II);
Carl Malmborg & Son (phase III);
JJO, Incorporated (phase IV)

Consultants
Weidlinger Associates, Inc (structural); Ralph Hartman, LA (landscape architecture); Distinctive Landscape Design (garden design)

Photography: Richard Mandelkorn



Citation for Affordable Housing:
Northside Terrace Condominium
Williamsburg (Brooklyn), New York

Architect:
James McCullar & Associates
New York City

Contractor:
Manadnock Construction, Inc.

Consultants:
Abraham Joselow, PC (mechanical, electrical); Pulaski & Sirota (structural); Ralph P. Albanese, RA (controlled inspections); Betro Consulting & Design Corp.

Photography: Wade Zimmerman

Interior Design Awards

Jury:

Lindsay Boutros-Ghali AIA
Lindsay Architecture Associates, Boston

Myron Miller AIA
Miller Dyer Spears, Boston

Robert Olson AIA
Robert Olson + Associates, Boston

Mark Ottmann IIDA
Mark Ottmann Design Associates, Boston

Michael Scanlon ASID
The Office of Michael Scanlon, Boston

Editor's Note:
The full text of jury comments, including responses to individual projects and presentation advice, may be found at www.architects.org/awards.html

68 Cole and Goyette, Architects and Planners
Thomas Gardner School
Allston, Massachusetts

67 Jung/Brannen Associates
Puma Sport North American Headquarters
Westford, Massachusetts

69 William Rawn Associates, Architects
Seiji Ozawa Hall at Tanglewood
Lenox, Massachusetts

70 Taylor MacDougall Burns Architects
Harrington Performing Arts Center, Bancroft School
Worcester, Massachusetts

71 Warner + Associates
East Cambridge Neighborhood Health Center
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Special Citation

71 Bergmeyer Associates
Radius, Boston

Interior Design Award:
Puma Sport North American Headquarters
Westford, Massachusetts

Architect:
Jung/Brannen Associates, Inc.
Boston
www.jb2000.com

Project team:
Bruce Johnson AIA (principal in charge); Mart Ojamaa AIA (consulting principal); Jeannine Campbell (project manager); Elizabeth Rotundi (project designer); Dorran Prescott (project designer); Ariel Brain (project architect)

Contractor:
Channel Building Company

Consultants:
Weidlinger Associates, Inc. (structural); AM-TECH Engineers, Inc. (mechanical, electrical)

Photography: Richard Mandelkorn









Interior Design Award:
Thomas Gardner School
Allston, Massachusetts

Edward Everett School
Dorchester, Massachusetts

Client:
Department of Neighborhood Development
City of Boston

Architect:
Cole and Goyette, Architects and Planners, Inc.
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Contractor:
W.T. Rich Company, Inc.

Consultants:
CBI Consulting Inc. (structural); Reardon and Turner (mechanical); R. G. Vanderweil Engineers, Inc. (electrical); Carol R. Johnson Associates, Inc. (landscape architecture); A.M. Fogarty & Associates, Inc. (costs); Berg/Howland Associates (lighting); Syska & Hennessy (elevator); SpecEdit (specifications);

Photography: Richard Mandelkorn



Interior Design Award:
Seiji Ozawa Hall at Tanglewood
Lenox, Massachusetts

Client:
Boston Symphony Orchestra

Architect:
William Rawn Associates, Architects, Inc.

Project team:
William L. Rawn III, FAIA (principal in charge); Alan Joslin (project architect); Clifford Gayley AIA (job captain)

Contractor:
Suffolk Construction Company, Inc.

Consultants:
LeMessurier Consultants (structural); TMP Consulting Engineers, Inc. (mechanical/plumbing); Lottero + Mason Associates, Inc. (electrical); Foresight Land Service (civil); GZA, Inc. (soils); Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates (landscape architecture); Theatre Projects (theatre); R. Lawrence Kirkegaard & Associates (acoustics); Douglas Baker (lighting); Donnell Consultants, Inc. (costs); SpecEdit (specifications)

Photography: Steve Rosenthal





Interior Design Award:
Harrington Performing Arts Center, Bancroft School
Worcester, Massachusetts

Architect:
Taylor MacDougall Burns Architects
Boston

Project team:
Robert Taylor AIA; Patricia MacDougall; Carol Burns AIA

Contractor:
Lauring Construction Company

Consultants:
Richard F. Burke (mechanical); Spaulding Associates (structural); Jim Read (theater)

Photography: Steve Rosenthal



Interior Design Award:
East Cambridge Neighborhood Health Center
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Client:
Cambridge Health Alliance

Architect:
Warner + Associates, Inc.
Boston

Project team:
Donald A. Warner AIA (principal in charge); David Farmer AIA (project architect); Leah Harrison (interior designer); Donald McNamara, PE (site representative)

Contractor:
Payton Construction Corporation

Consultants:
Thompson Consultants, Inc.(MEP/fire protection); Ly Consulting Engineers, Inc. (structural)

Photography: Greg Premu



Special Citation
Interior Design:
Radius
Boston

Client:
Christopher Myers, Owner
Michael Schlow, Chef/Owner

Architect:
Bergmeyer Associates, Inc.
Boston
www.bergmeyer.com

Consultants:
Proverb Ltd. (graphics); Zade Company, Inc. (engineering)

photography: Richard Mandelkorn





Young Architects Awards

Jury:

Maryann Thompson AIA, Chair
Thompson and Rose Architects
Cambridge, Massachusetts

David Eisen
Eisen Architects, Boston
architecture critic, *The Boston Herald*

Nader Tehrani
Office dA, Boston

Nick Winton
Anmahian Winton Architects
Cambridge, Massachusetts

73 Julian Bonder, Assoc. AIA
The Center for Holocaust Studies, Clark University
Worcester, Massachusetts

74 Stephan Chung
Zartoshty Loft Renovation, Boston

Honorable Mentions:

75 Jonathan R. Traficonte AIA
The Abbe Museum of Native American Artifacts
Bar Harbor, Maine

75 Jonathan R. Traficonte AIA
World Trade Center Marine Terminal Boston

Editor's Note:
The full text of jury comments may be found at
www.architects.org/awards.html







Young Architects Award:
The Center for Holocaust Studies, Clark University
Worcester, Massachusetts

Architect:
Julian Bonder, Assoc. AIA
(Julian Bonder & Associates)
Cambridge, Massachusetts and Buenos Aires

Project team:
Julian Bonder, Assoc. AIA
Pierre Beranger

Associated architect:
David Honn AIA

Architect of record:
Rykerson Architecture

Construction manager:
Cutler Associates

Consultant:
Foley & Buhl Engineering (structural)

Photography
Tom Lingner/Vanderwarker Photographs

Young Architects Award:
Zartoshty Loft Renovation
Boston

Architect:
Stephen Chung
(mod. A)
Boston

Project team:
Stephen Chung,
Kamaran Zahedi (principals)

Contractor:
Turnkey Development, Inc.

Consultants:
Boston Woodworks (woodwork)

Photography: Eric Roth







Honorable Mention:
The Abbe Museum of Native American Artifacts
Bar Harbor, Maine

Architect:
Jonathan R. Traficonte AIA (Schwartz/Silver Architects, Inc.)
Boston

Project team:
Warren R. Schwartz FAIA, Jonathan R. Traficonte AIA, Stephen B. Davis

Contractor:
E. L. Shea

Consultants:
Scott Homer Engineers (structural); Lanpher Associates (MEP); Bruce Crawford & Co. Engineering Consultants (civil); Sam Coplon (landscape architecture)



Honorable Mention:
World Trade Center Marine Terminal
Boston

Architect:
Jonathan R. Traficonte AIA (Schwartz/Silver Architects, Inc.)
Boston

Design Team:
Jonathan R. Traficonte AIA, Christopher B. Ingersoll AIA, Nelson K. Liu

Contractor:
AGM Marine Contractors Inc.

Consultants:
Childs Engineering (structural);
S. B. Sager Associates (electrical)

Unbuilt Architecture Awards

Jury:

Robert Brown AIA, IIDA, Chair
CBT/Childs Bertman Tseckares Inc., Boston

Elise Gispan AIA
HNTB, Boston

Leah Greenwald AIA
West Hill Architects, Brookline, Massachusetts

Jude LeBlanc
Georgia Institute of Technology

Dennis Pieprz, Assoc. AIA
Sasaki Associates, Watertown, Massachusetts

Andrew Scott
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Jan Wampler FAIA
Jan Wampler FAIA, Architect, Boston

77 Archimania Architects
River Chapel

77 Liminal Projects
Dam Yankees: Urban Connectors
for New York's East River
New York City

78 Hyunjoon Yoo
Pedestrian Bridge at the Fort Point Channel, Boston

78 Hyunjoon Yoo
Air-Fishnet Plaza

79 Paul Lukez Architecture
North End Traces, Boston

79 Luoni Gold Design Studio
Civilizing Technologies: Solar Wall
for the Department of Energy, Washington, DC

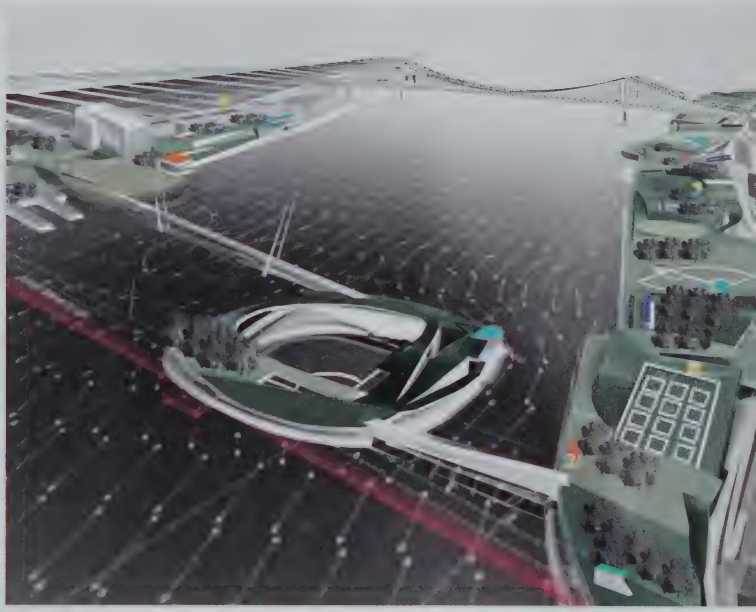
Editor's Note:
The full text of jury comments may be found at
www.architects.org/awards.html

Unbuilt Architecture Award:
River Chapel

Designer:
Archimania Architects (Jeff Blackledge AIA)
Memphis, Tennessee

Sited on the Mississippi River, the River Chapel was strongly influenced by the river itself, the barges that travel the river, and the rural churches that dot the fields along the river's path. As one progresses through the site, one is drawn into a sequence of experiences that parallel the circle of life.





Unbuilt Architecture Award:
Dam Yankees: Urban Connectors for New York's East River
New York City

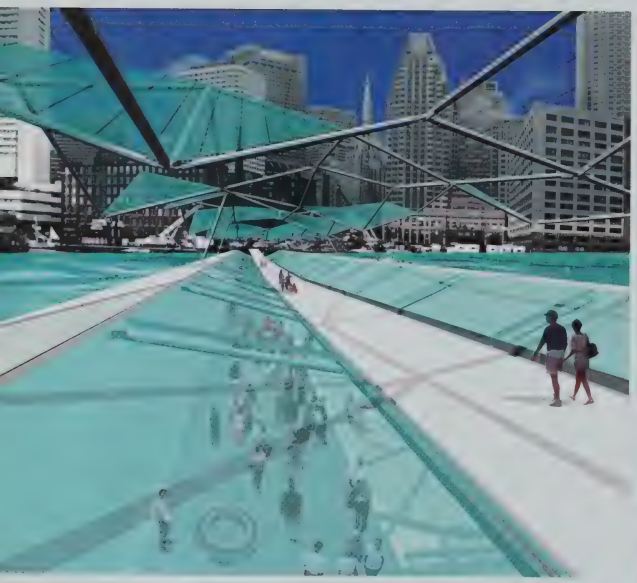
Designer:
Liminal Projects Inc. (Omar Khan, Laura Garofalo)
Cambridge, Massachusetts

"Dam" Yankees reconfigures the New York waterfront to develop a single park separated by the East River. This separation is bridged by Yankee Stadium, which sits inside the East River with its playing field resting on the river's bed. The proposal rethinks the role of iconic structures like Yankee Stadium in the life of a city.

Unbuilt Architecture Award:
Pedestrian Bridge at the Fort Point Channel
Boston

Designer:
Hyunjoon Yoo
(LSGM Architects)
New York City

This project is a hybrid of a pedestrian bridge and the 20th-Century Industrial Museum. This bridge is not only for passing "over" the water, but also for passing "under" the water. Water height fluctuates with the tide and the height of the bridge varies along the path, giving varying spatial experiences.



Unbuilt Architecture Award:
Air-Fishnet Plaza

Designer:
Hyunjoon Yoo
(LSGM Architects)
New York City

According to Einstein's theory of general relativity, a massive body warps the fabric of space around it. Here, the weight of human bodies and the force of wind shape the contour of the plaza, and the contour of the plaza affects the movement of people on the net. The Air-Fishnet Plaza creates two-way communication among architecture, man, and nature.

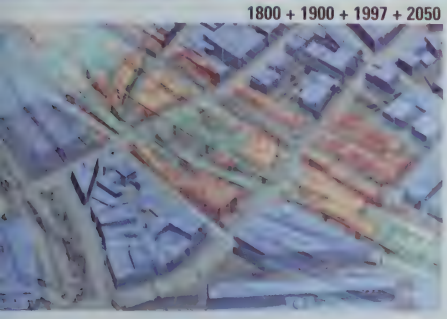


Unbuilt Architecture Award:
Civilizing Technologies: Solar Wall for the Department of Energy
Washington, DC

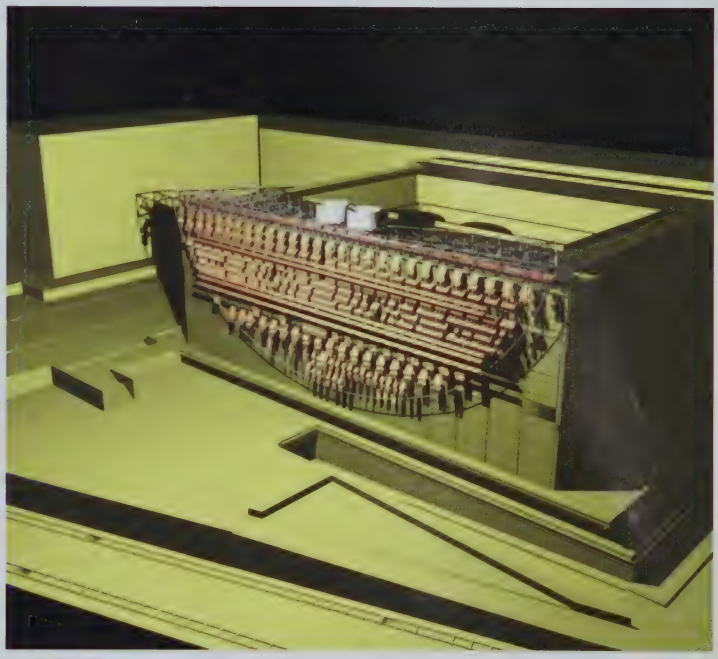
Designer:
Luoni Gold Design Studio
Gainesville, Florida

Contemporary technological building systems can not only participate in a dignified urban expression, but also can offer their own dignified celebrations of civicness. This scheme for the DOE solar wall proposes the reconciliation of technological infrastructure proposed for buildings of the future with the monumental gestures expected of public buildings in Washington, DC.









Unbuilt Architecture Award:
North End Traces
Boston

Client:
NEWCAC (a North End Community Group)

Designer:
Paul Lukez Architecture
Somerville, Massachusetts
www.lukez.com

"North End Traces" suggests a design process for the parcels made available by lthe depression of the Central Artery. By transforming superimposed digital models of three distinct layers of Boston's historic development, designs were developed that echo the scale and geometry of Boston's past, yet respond to current community needs.



Special Awards

Every year Boston-area architects are honored by their colleagues around the country for contributions to design, to our profession, and to the communities we serve. During 2000, such national recognition was conferred on these colleagues:

AIA Honor Award: Architecture
Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art
(MASS MoCA)
North Adams, Massachusetts

Bruner/Cott & Associates
Cambridge, Massachusetts
www.brunercott.com

photo: Peter Vanderwarker



MASS MoCA, Bruner Cott & Associates

AIA Honor Award: Interiors
Seiji Ozawa Hall at Tanglewood
Lenox, Massachusetts
William Rawn Associates, Architects
Boston

AIA Honor Award: Urban Design
The Village of Park DuValle
Louisville, Kentucky
designed by William Rawn Associates (Boston)
and Stull and Lee (Boston);
planning by Urban Design Associates (Pittsburgh)

AIA Institute Honors
for Collaborative Achievement
William Lam, Assoc. AIA (Cambridge)

Elevated to AIA College of Fellows:
Edward Allen FAIA
Rebecca Barnes FAIA
Mark Kalin FAIA
Peter Kuttner FAIA
Frank Mead FAIA
Robert Miklos FAIA

Each year the BSA also identifies architects, allies, and institutions that the BSA believes deserve special recognition for their contributions to the Massachusetts architectural community and to the enrichment of our built and natural environments. In 2000, the BSA conferred these honors:

Award of Honor
M. David Lee FAIA *(see page 18)*

Commonwealth Award
The Cambridge (Massachusetts)
Historical Commission

Honorary Membership
in the Boston Society of Architects
Robert Doran, Hon. BSA



Case Study: Window Replacement

Reed Campus Center
Williston Northampton School
Easthampton, MA

MARVIN Windows and Doors



Criteria:

- Basic aluminum windows with panning - unacceptable.
- Keep installation simple.
- Keep labor costs low.
- Match existing trim.
- Retain current daylight openings.
- Make it maintenance free.

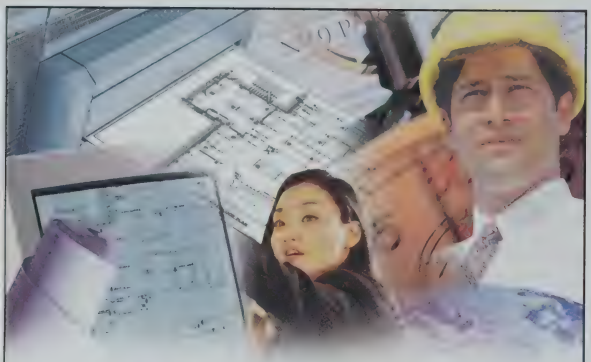
Solution:

- Full unit replacements within existing wood frames.
- Special extruded frame expander.
- Custom profile aluminum snap trim to match existing profile.
- Round top units utilized welded flat stock along with snap trim.
- Custom sill pans.

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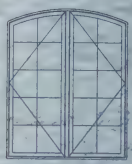


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Bowdoin College

2000 BSA Housing Awards ProgramWinner

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Puma Sport North American Sales
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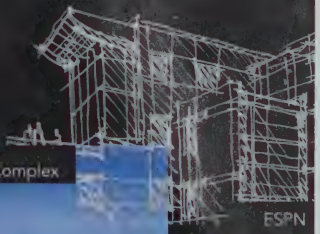


1999
excellence in architecture
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
Ancient Near East Gallery



Photos © Richard Mandelkorn

1998
interior architecture/interior design
Braun North American Sales
Headquarters



ESPN

City of Providence Public Safety Complex





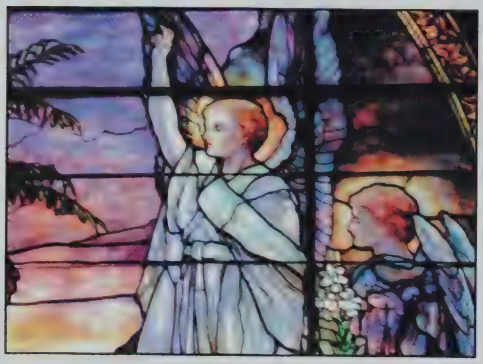
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Worthington Place joins our list of recent award-winners

The McCallie School, Chattanooga, TN

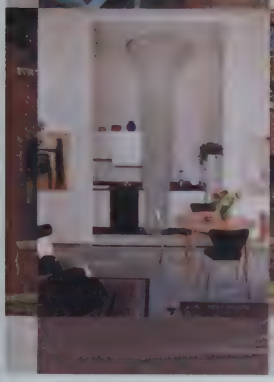
The Healey School, Somerville, MA

The Agassiz School, Cambridge, MA

Central Tree Middle School, Rutland, MA

Torroella House, Cambridge, MA

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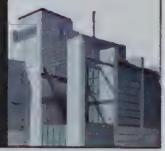
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25 Years Ago...

The 1975 Harleston Parker Medal
Christian Science Center

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1975 Harleston Parker Jury

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Richard Jay Bertman FAIA
Howard F. Elkus FAIA
Remmert W. Huygens FAIA
Samuel E. Mintz AIA
Theodore A. Monacelli AIA
Richard S. Morehouse AIA
Donald J. Tellalian AIA
Henry Wood FAIA

The Harleston Parker Medal, Boston's most prestigious architecture award, was established in 1921 to recognize "the most beautiful piece of architecture, building, monument, or structure within the limits of the City of Boston or of the Metropolitan Parks District."

Twenty-five years ago, the Parker Medal jury chose to honor the Christian Science Center, commenting: "...Although reservations concerning the social planning and ideological implications of the project were expressed, the majority of the Committee felt the consistency and control in both the conceptual design and its detailed execution, together with the owner's and architect's expressed aim to provide a public urban space for the city made this project an appropriate recipient..."

Today, the Christian Science Center is undergoing a site development and restoration program led by Ann Beha Associates (architect of the masterplan and of the Mary Baker Eddy Library for the Betterment of Humanity), Douglas Reed & Associates (landscape architect for the library), and ADD Inc (architect for the employee workspace).

The winner of the 2000 Harleston Parker Medal is the Davis Museum and Cultural Center at Wellesley College *(see page 33)*.



Photo courtesy of the First Church of Christ, Scientist

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